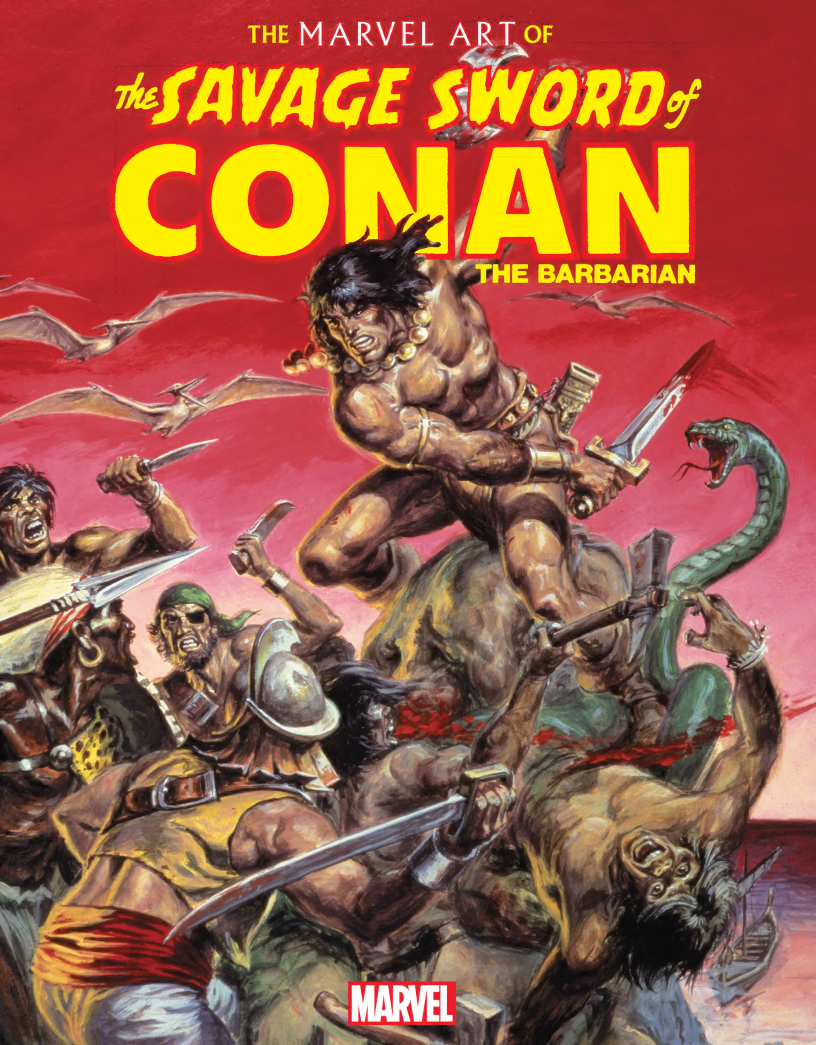
THE MARVEL ART OF

The SAVAGE SWORD of CONAN

THE BARBARIAN



MARVEL

THE MARVEL ART OF

the SAVAGE SWORD of CONAN

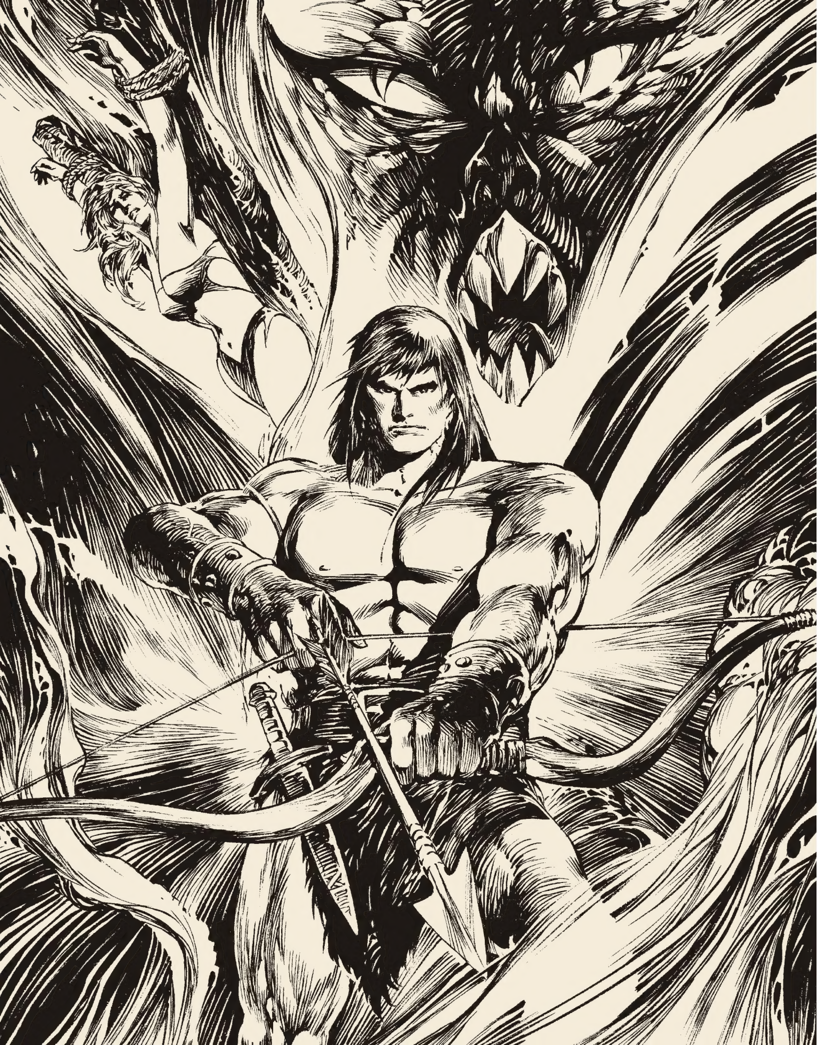
THE BARBARIAN

WRITTEN BY
JOHN RHETT THOMAS

INTRODUCTION
ROY THOMAS

AFTERWORD
P. CRAIG RUSSELL

DESIGNED BY
JESS SAPPENFIELD



INTRODUCTION

by Roy Thomas

Robert E. Howard's swashbuckling Cimmerian was less than a year old in the color *Conan the Barbarian* when he became the star of Marvel's second-ever black-and-white magazine, *Savage Tales,* in 1971.

While it took that title a few years to gain a firm foothold, the next step seems pre-ordained: *The Savage Sword of Conan,* a magazine dedicated entirely to the black-maned warrior.

Conan's black-and-white adventures continued until 1996... a quarter of a century, during his first time around at Marvel. Even when *Savage Sword* was discontinued after a record-breaking 235 issues, there were ten more under a new masthead, *Conan the Savage.*

Having been lucky enough to scribe the character's adventures in all three titles—including at both the beginning and end of the *Savage Sword* era—I faced firsthand both the blessings and the banes of a "colorless" Conan.

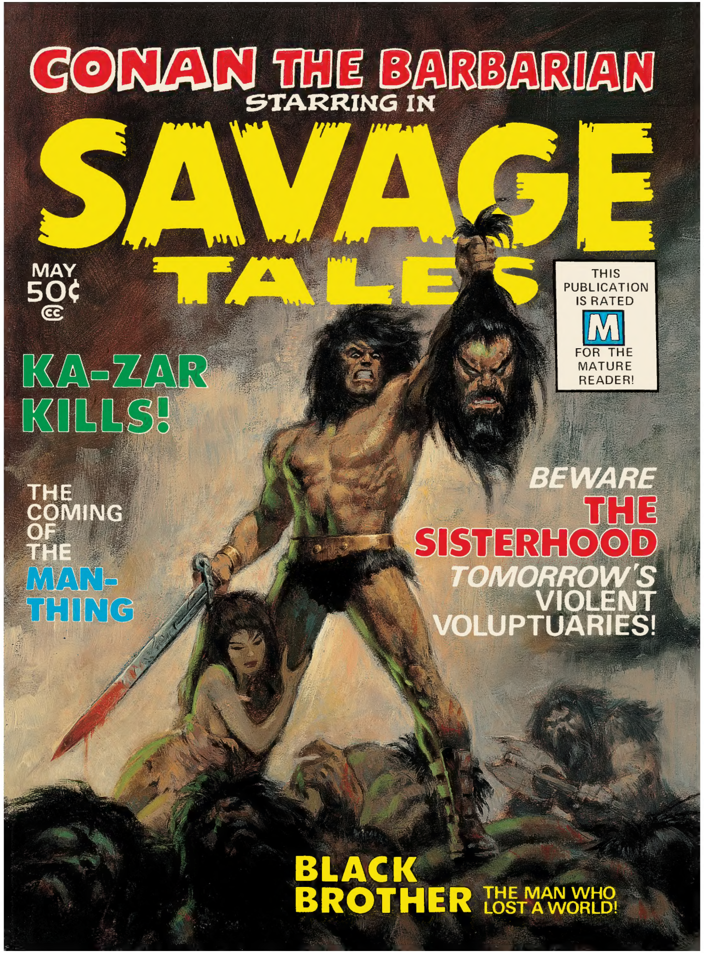
Things started off with an Hyborian Age bang, since Barry Smith (later Windsor-Smith) was on hand to illustrate the art adaptation of Robert E. Howard's "The Frost-Giant's Daughter," a chilling masterpiece that holds up well, half a century later. When *Savage Tales* returned after a two-year hiatus, however, Barry immediately topped himself with his work on "Red Nails," which, in my eyes, remains the definitive depiction of a Conan story.

Black-and-white comic art presents both problems and possibilities that are absent in a full-color story. As a general thing, more "blacks"—inked areas that may represent shadows, contours, ebony artifacts or simply design elements—are needed to grab the eye the way the colors of the spectrum do in an "ordinary" comic book. If the artwork is too open, too bereft of dark ink, the reader may have trouble discerning precisely what's going on. Carried to an extreme, it can wind up looking like pages from a child's coloring book.

Different artists, over those 25 years of a black-and-white Marvel Conan, solved that problem in various ways.

Barry's was simply to draw the hell out of whatever he *did* draw. Your eyes were pulled—not just to the Art Nouveau-influenced *detail* he increasingly put into his work but to the intensity, indeed the *reality,* of the illustrations. His human figures might not be photo-realistic, nor was he necessarily trying to make them so, but they had their own undeniable reality, drawing you in as surely as a 3D movie. Color could later be added to "Red Nails" to give the reader a *different* viewing experience... but it wouldn't be a *superior* one.

Savage Sword of Conan No. 109. Pinup. Pencils and inks, E. R. Cruz. June 1992.


CONAN THE BARBARIAN
STARRING IN
SAVAGE TALES
MAY
50¢
CC
THIS PUBLICATION IS RATED M FOR THE MATURE READER!
KA-ZAR KILLS!
THE COMING OF THE MAN-THING
BEWARE THE SISTERHOOD
TOMORROW'S VIOLENT VOLUPTUARIES!
BLACK BROTHER
THE MAN WHO LOST A WORLD!

Barry was followed by other skilled artists, many of whom are sampled in the following pages.

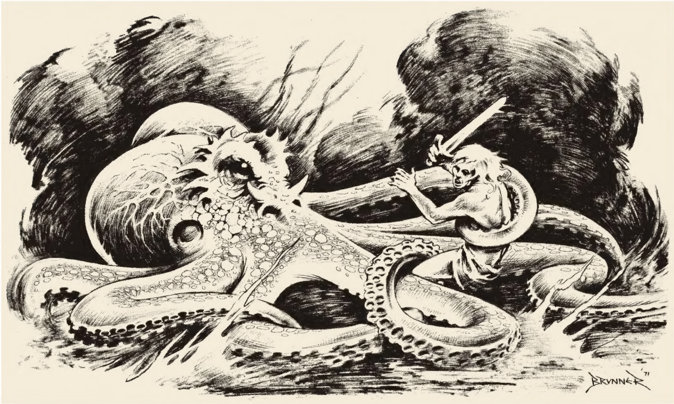
John Buscema was easily the ultimate Conan artist of those Marvel decades, and not merely for the sheer quantity of pages he drew from *Savage Sword* No. 1 through the final issue of *Conan the Savage*. On occasion, usually in single illustrations, he'd ink his own pencils and show just how powerful it could look. However, since he was usually inked by others, his off-and-on *Savage Sword* tenure gave others a chance to shine, adding their own surface luster to the solid drawing underneath.

Foremost among these embellishers were an honor roll of talented artists hailing from the Philippines:

Alfredo Alcala, whose multi-line approach made "Black Colossus," et al., an eldritch blending of Hal Foster, legendary artist of *Prince Valiant*, and Gustave Doré, the celebrated nineteenth-century illustrator of Dante…

Tony DeZuniga, John's favorite among his Conan inkers because of his ability to, if anything, make the Buscema art seem even more lifelike, as if one were staring into some world of heightened reality…

The unstoppable Ernie Chan…the exquisite Rudy Nebres…the utterly unique Alex Niño…the lush Nestor Redonodo…the powerful Armando Gil… and I'm probably forgetting one or two others from that island nation.



OPPOSITE
Savage Tales No. 1. Cover. John Buscema. May 1971.

ABOVE
Savage Tales No. 2. Text piece illustration. Frank Brunner. October 1973.

Interestingly, each of the above also contributed their own stories and/or illustrations, showing they weren't reliant even on John Buscema to add to the Conan mythos.

Gil Kane, the second-ever Marvel Conan artist, was there too. When he inked his own pencils, the drawings looked more "open for color" than those of most artists in the black-and-white books, yet that work had its own integrity and, deservingly, its own enthusiastic fans.

From the 1970s through the '90s, rare was the artist who *didn't* want to try his hand at doing at least one Conan story or illustration:

The incomparable Neal Adams was there for a single tale, plus several powerful *Savage Tales* covers…

Alex Toth, one of comics' great designers, came aboard for a portfolio… and don't I wish I could've co-spun one yarn with him (though we'd have probably come to verbal blows before it was over)…

Walter Simonson, near the beginning of a storied career, but providing an individualistic authenticity to Howard's pseudo-historical "Hyborian Age" essay…

Earl Norem, who brought the grittiness of the "men's adventure" pulps to a series of strong covers…

Other fabled names, among many: Gene Day…Mike Zeck…Gene Colan… Sal Buscema…Kerry Gammill…Pablo Marcos…Gary Kwapisz…Frank Brunner…Jim Starlin…Andy Kubert…Bob Larkin and Joe Jusko and Michael Kaluta, each illustrating some stupendous covers…

And, oh, yes, while we're talking about *covers*…

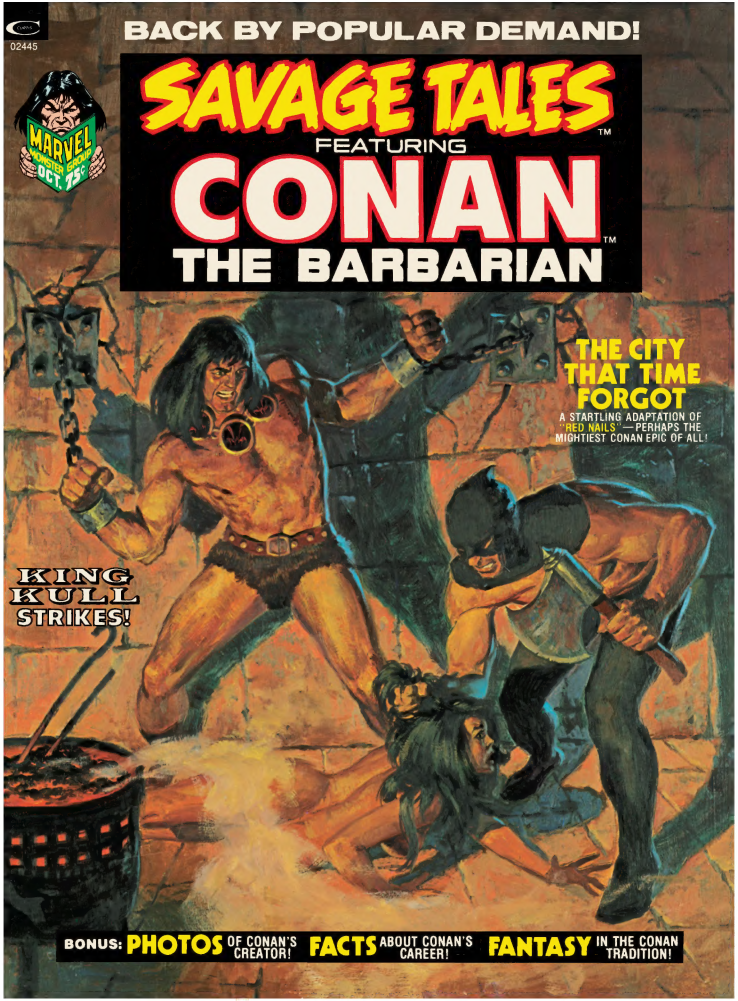
Boris.

Boris Vallejo was my choice to paint the cover of *Savage Sword* No. 1, and every cover after that I could get him to do, until, before long, he had priced himself out of Marvel's range. Virtually all his *Savage Sword* covers are reproduced herein—which is exactly as it should be. What Frank Frazetta was to the covers of the 1960s' Conan paperbacks, Boris was to the early covers of *The Savage Sword of Conan.*

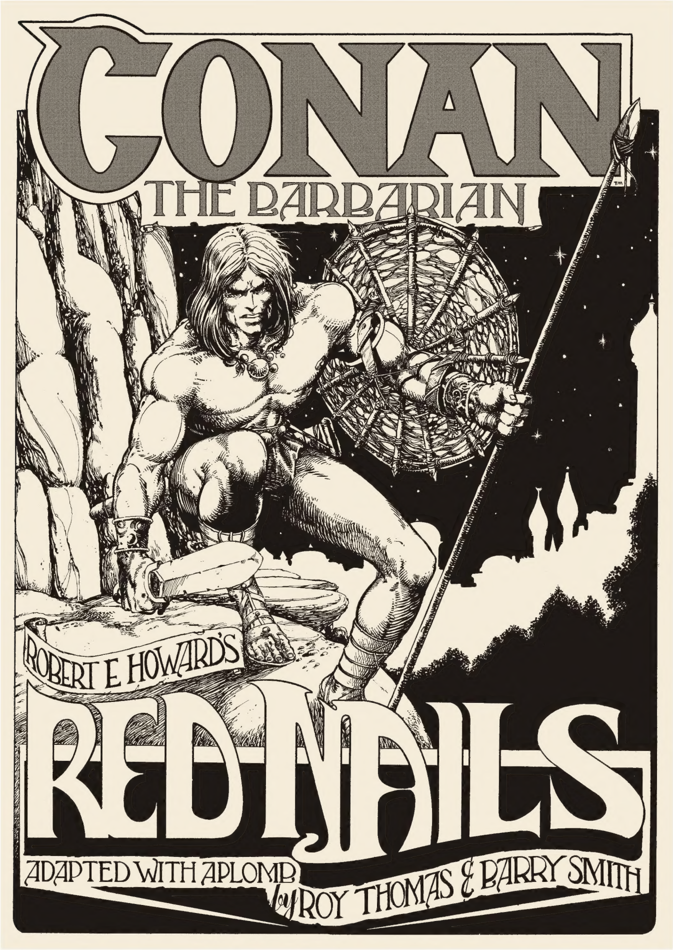
Even so, Conan is bigger, grander, more vital than any one artist, any one writer (except, of course, Robert E. Howard). He has been a kaleidoscopic whetstone upon which some of the finest talents in comics have honed their artistic steel.

And there's many a sword thrust left in the Cimmerian yet!

Roy Thomas has written comics, particularly for Marvel, since 1965. He counts Conan as the character he most enjoyed writing for the House of Ideas.

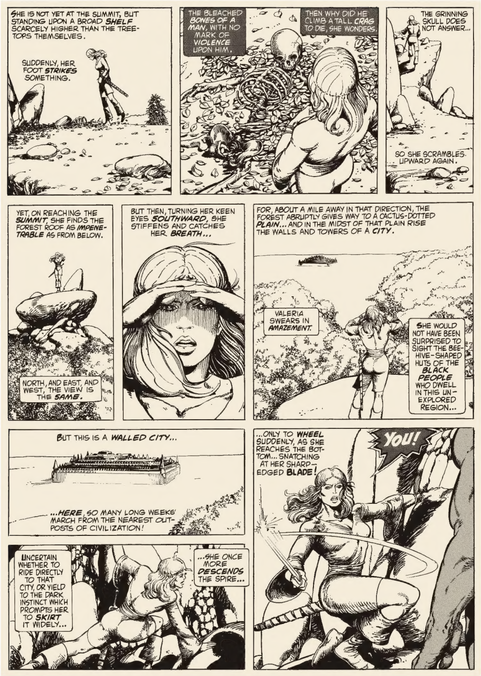

02445
BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!
MARVEL MONSTER GROUP
OCT. 75¢
SAVAGE TALES™
FEATURING
CONAN™
THE BARBARIAN
THE CITY THAT TIME FORGOT
A STARTLING ADAPTATION OF "RED NAILS"—PERHAPS THE MIGHTIEST CONAN EPIC OF ALL!
KING KULL STRIKES!
BONUS: PHOTOS OF CONAN'S CREATOR! FACTS ABOUT CONAN'S CAREER! FANTASY IN THE CONAN TRADITION!

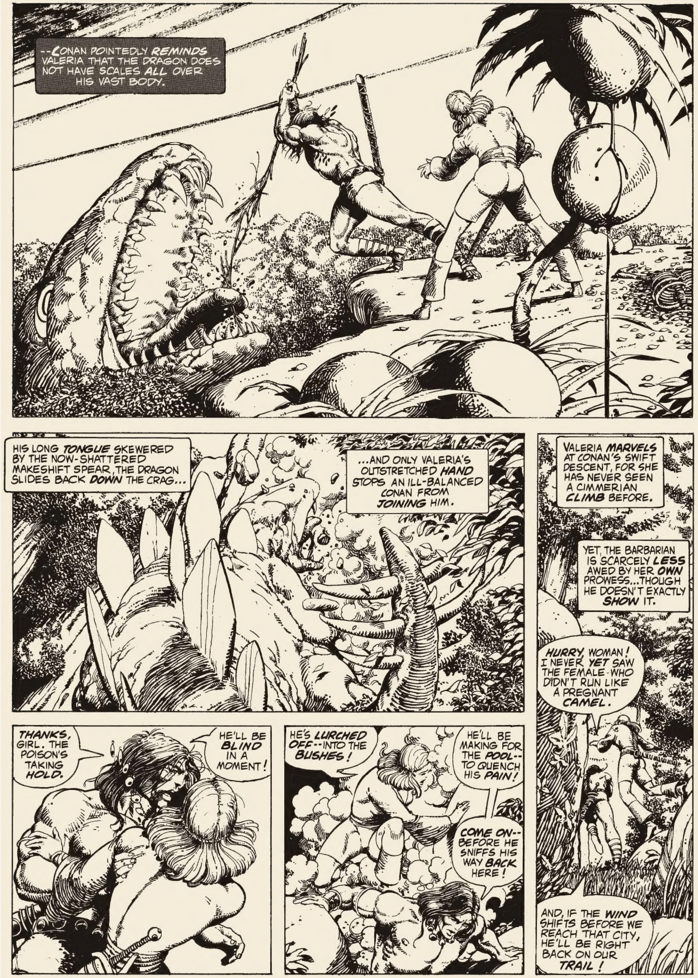
Savage Tales No. 2. Cover. John Buscema. October 1973.

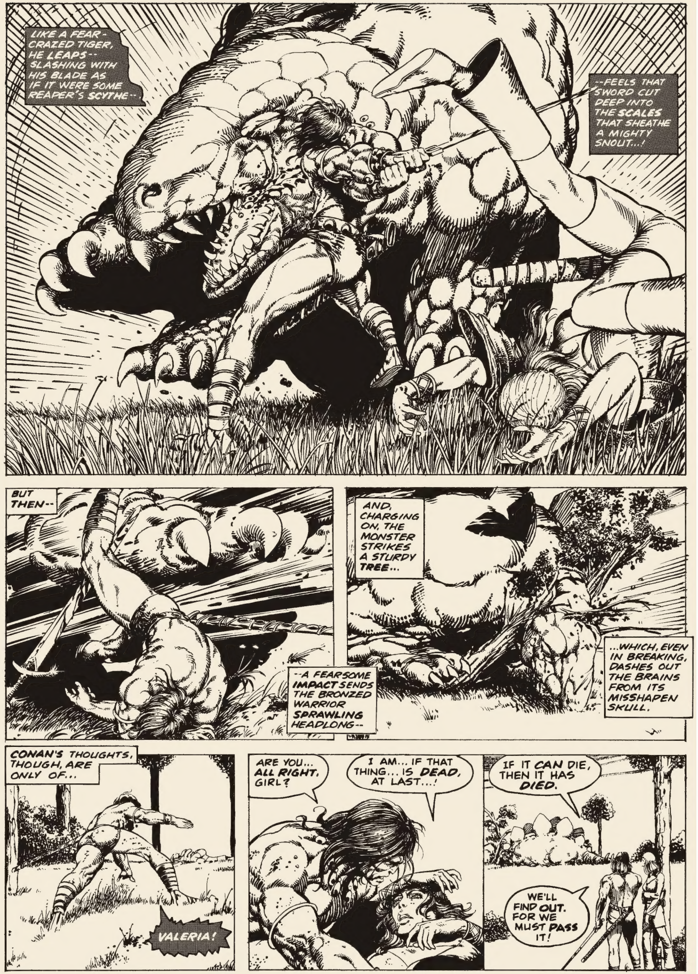

CONAN
THE BARBARIAN
™
ROBERT E HOWARD'S
RED NAILS
ADAPTED WITH APLOMB
by ROY THOMAS & BARRY SMITH

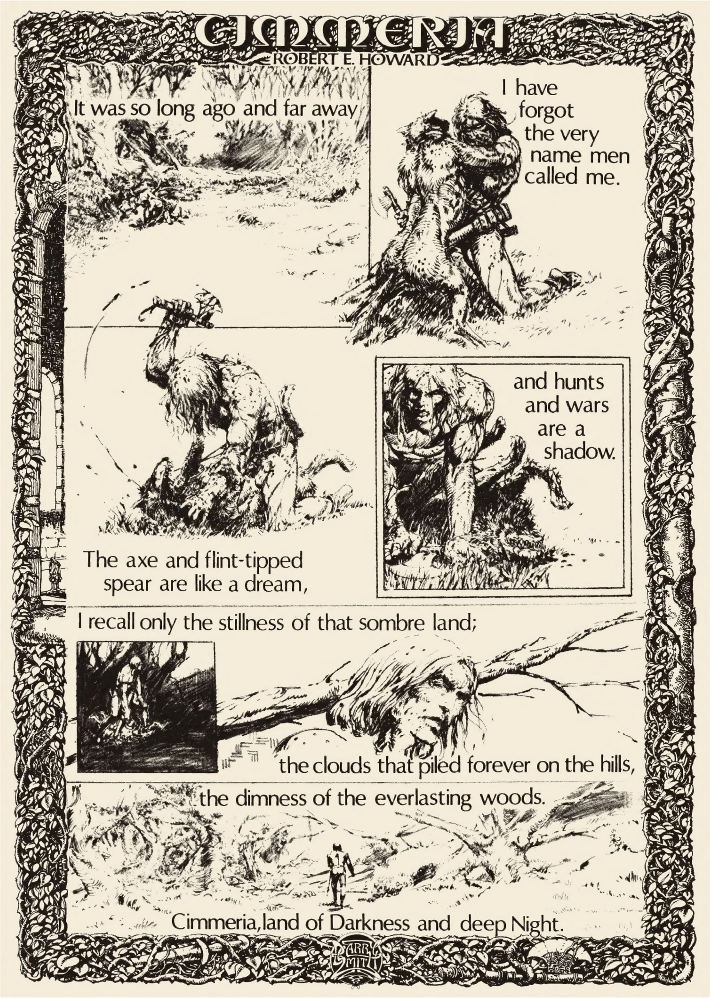
With his work on the color title behind him, Barry Windsor-Smith was at the height of his creative powers in comics with his and Roy Thomas' lyrical take on Robert E. Howard's final Conan story, "Red Nails." Serialized over two issues of *Savage Tales*, "Red Nails" fulfilled the storytelling promise of the black-and-white magazine format with its meditative pacing and the lyricism of Windsor-Smith's art.

THIS AND FOLLOWING SPREAD
Savage Tales No. 2. Interior art, "Red Nails." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils and inks, Barry Windsor-Smith. October 1973.


SHE IS NOT YET AT THE SUMMIT, BUT STANDING UPON A BROAD SHELF SCARCELY HIGHER THAN THE TREE-TOPS THEMSELVES.
SUDDENLY, HER FOOT STRIKES SOMETHING.
THE BLEACHED BONES OF A MAN, WITH NO MARK OF VIOLENCE UPON HIM.
THEN WHY DID HE CLIMB A TALL CRAG TO DIE, SHE WONDERS.
THE GRINNING SKULL DOES NOT ANSWER...
SO SHE SCRAMBLES UPWARD AGAIN.
YET, ON REACHING THE SUMMIT, SHE FINDS THE FOREST ROOF AS IMPENETRABLE AS FROM BELOW.
NORTH, AND EAST, AND WEST, THE VIEW IS THE SAME.
BUT THEN, TURNING HER KEEN EYES SOUTHWARD, SHE STIFFENS AND CATCHES HER BREATH...
FOR, ABOUT A MILE AWAY IN THAT DIRECTION, THE FOREST ABRUPTLY GIVES WAY TO A CACTUS-DOTTED PLAIN... AND IN THE MIDST OF THAT PLAIN RISE THE WALLS AND TOWERS OF A CITY.
VALERIA SWEARS IN AMAZEMENT.
SHE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SURPRISED TO SIGHT THE BEE-HIVE-SHAPED HUTS OF THE BLACK PEOPLE WHO DWELL IN THIS UNEXPLORED REGION...
BUT THIS IS A WALLED CITY...
...HERE, SO MANY LONG WEEKS' MARCH FROM THE NEAREST OUTPOSTS OF CIVILIZATION!
UNCERTAIN WHETHER TO RIDE DIRECTLY TO THAT CITY, OR YIELD TO THE DARK INSTINCT WHICH PROMPTS HER TO SKIRT IT WIDELY...
...SHE ONCE MORE DESCENDS THE SPIRE...
...ONLY TO WHEEL SUDDENLY, AS SHE REACHES THE BOTTOM... SNATCHING AT HER SHARP-EDGED BLADE!
YOU!

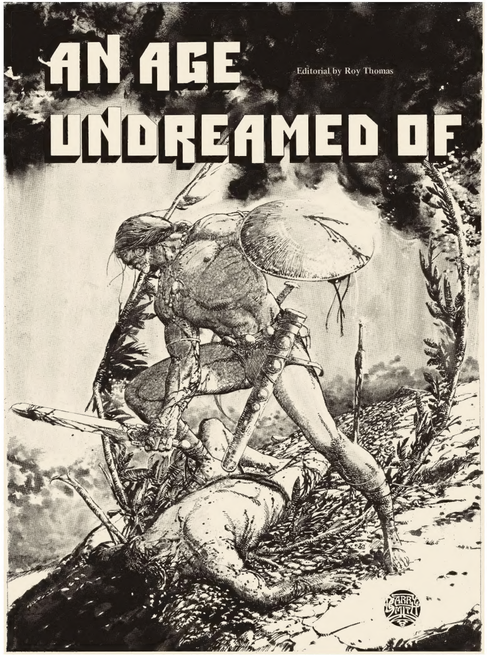

--CONAN POINTEDLY REMINDS VALERIA THAT THE DRAGON DOES NOT HAVE SCALES ALL OVER HIS VAST BODY.
HIS LONG TONGUE SKEWERED BY THE NOW-SHATTERED MAKESHIFT SPEAR, THE DRAGON SLIDES BACK DOWN THE CRAG...
...AND ONLY VALERIA'S OUTSTRETCHED HAND STOPS AN ILL-BALANCED CONAN FROM JOINING HIM.
VALERIA MARVELS AT CONAN'S SWIFT DESCENT, FOR SHE HAS NEVER SEEN A CIMMERIAN CLIMB BEFORE.
YET, THE BARBARIAN IS SCARCELY LESS AWED BY HER OWN PROWESS...THOUGH HE DOESN'T EXACTLY SHOW IT.
HURRY, WOMAN! I NEVER YET SAW THE FEMALE WHO DIDN'T RUN LIKE A PREGNANT CAMEL.
THANKS, GIRL. THE POISON'S TAKING HOLD.
HE'LL BE BLIND IN A MOMENT!
HE'S LURCHED OFF--INTO THE BUSHES!
HE'LL BE MAKING FOR THE POOL--TO QUENCH HIS PAIN!
COME ON--BEFORE HE SNIFFS HIS WAY BACK HERE!
AND, IF THE WIND SHIFTS BEFORE WE REACH THAT CITY, HE'LL BE RIGHT BACK ON OUR TRAIL!


LIKE A FEAR-CRAZED TIGER, HE LEAPS--SLASHING WITH HIS BLADE AS IF IT WERE SOME REAPER'S SCYTHE--
--FEELS THAT SWORD CUT DEEP INTO THE SCALES THAT SHEATHE A MIGHTY SNOUT...!
BUT THEN--
--A FEARSOME IMPACT SENDS THE BRONZED WARRIOR SPRAWLING HEADLONG--
AND, CHARGING ON, THE MONSTER STRIKES A STURDY TREE...
...WHICH, EVEN IN BREAKING, DASHES OUT THE BRAINS FROM ITS MISSHAPEN SKULL.
CONAN'S THOUGHTS, THOUGH, ARE ONLY OF...
VALERIA!
ARE YOU... ALL RIGHT, GIRL?
I AM... IF THAT THING... IS DEAD, AT LAST...!
IF IT CAN DIE, THEN IT HAS DIED.
WE'LL FIND OUT. FOR WE MUST PASS IT!


CIMMERIA
ROBERT E. HOWARD
It was so long ago and far away
I have forgot the very name men called me.
The axe and flint-tipped spear are like a dream,
and hunts and wars are a shadow.
I recall only the stillness of that sombre land;
the clouds that piled forever on the hills,
the dimness of the everlasting woods.
Cimmeria, land of Darkness and deep Night.
BARRY SMITH

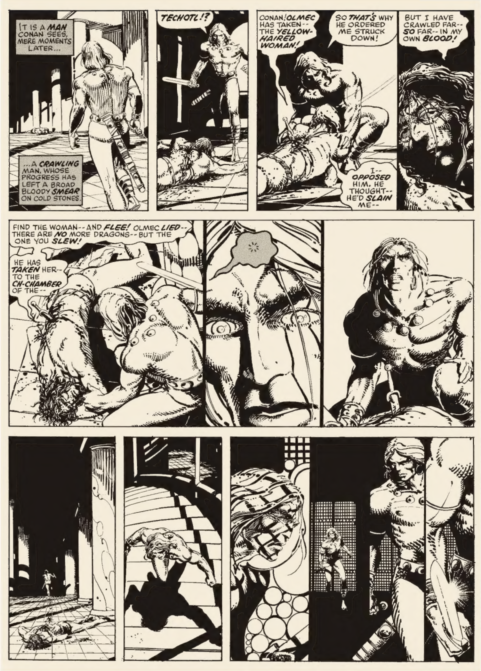
RIGHT
Savage Tales No. 3. Text piece illustration. Pencils and inks, Barry Windsor-Smith. February 1974.

Windsor-Smith's pencil-and-inks sketch for a yet unpublished painting kicked off a text article by Thomas. Text pieces in *Savage Tales* were supported by spot illustrations by the likes of Frank Brunner, Al Williamson, Roy Krenkel and Windsor-Smith.


AN AGE UNDREAMED OF
Editorial by Roy Thomas
BARRY SMITH

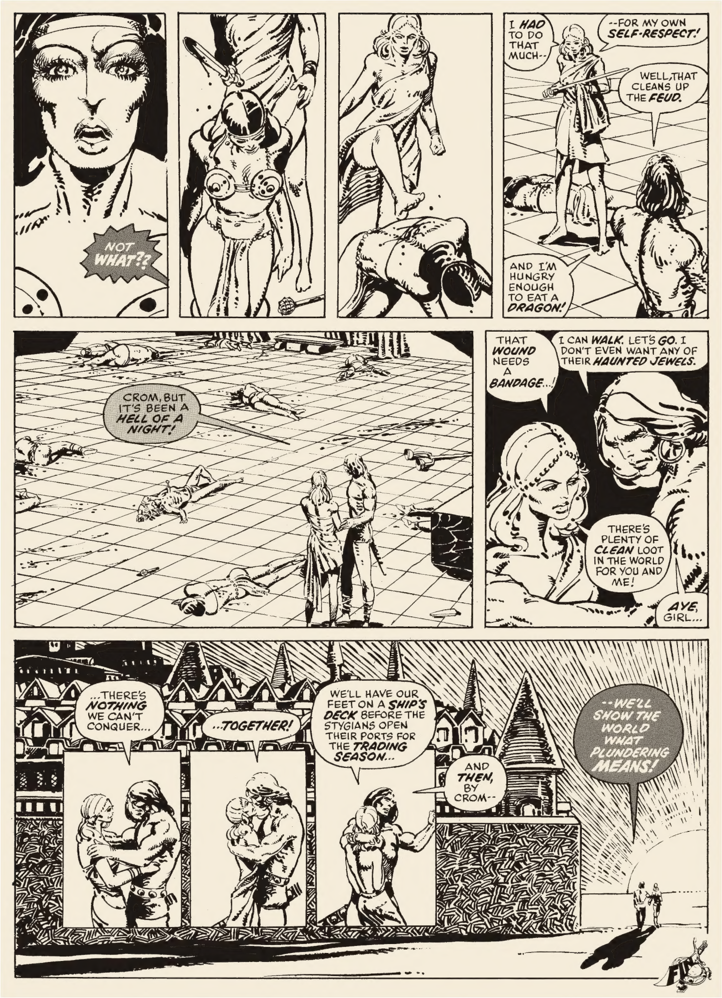
OPPOSITE
Savage Tales No. 2. Interior art. Script, Robert E. Howard; pencils and inks, Barry Windsor-Smith. October 1973.

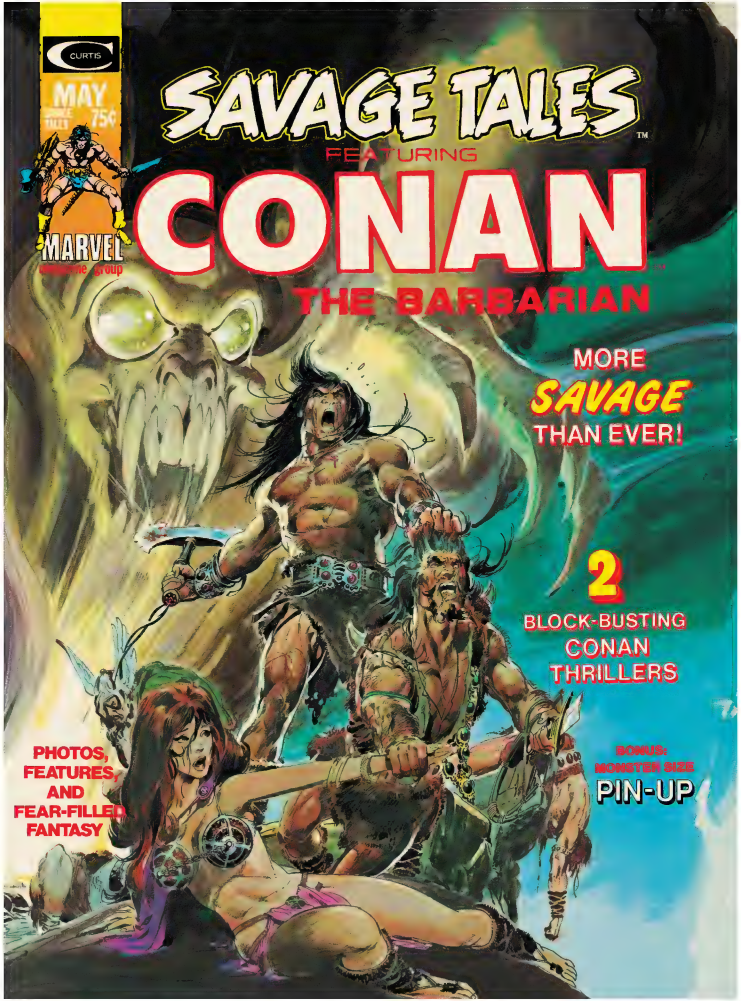
The first installment of "Red Nails" was backed up by another Windsor-Smith story, this one an adaptation of the Howard poem "Cimmeria," again emphasizing that *Savage Sword* would be a vehicle for the kinds of diverse story content that would not be possible in the monthly color comics.


IT IS A MAN CONAN SEES, MERE MOMENTS LATER...
...A CRAWLING MAN, WHOSE PROGRESS HAS LEFT A BROAD BLOODY SMEAR ON COLD STONES.
TECHOTL!?
CONAN! OLMEC HAS TAKEN-- THE YELLOW-HAIRED WOMAN!
SO THAT'S WHY HE ORDERED ME STRUCK DOWN!
BUT I HAVE CRAWLED FAR-- SO FAR-- IN MY OWN BLOOD!
I-- OPPOSED HIM. HE THOUGHT-- HE'D SLAIN ME--
FIND THE WOMAN-- AND FLEE! OLMEC LIED-- THERE ARE NO MORE DRAGONS-- BUT THE ONE YOU SLEW!
HE HAS TAKEN HER-- TO THE CH-CHAMBER OF THE--

ABOVE AND OPPOSITE
Savage Tales No. 3. Interior art, "Red Nails." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils and inks, Barry Windsor-Smith. February 1974.

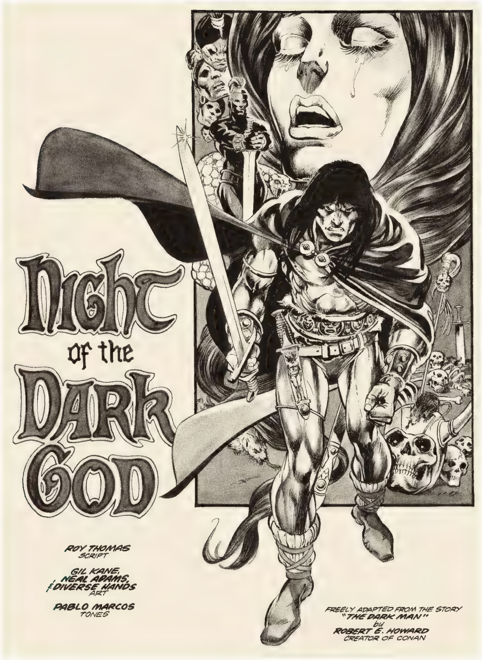
A scheduling hiccup that delayed the third issue of *Savage Tales* by a couple of months gave Windsor-Smith more time to perfect the final, horror-tinged installment of his finely detailed "Red Nails" masterpiece.


NOT WHAT??
I HAD TO DO THAT MUCH--
--FOR MY OWN SELF-RESPECT!
WELL, THAT CLEANS UP THE FEUD.
AND I'M HUNGRY ENOUGH TO EAT A DRAGON!
CROM, BUT IT'S BEEN A HELL OF A NIGHT!
THAT WOUND NEEDS A BANDAGE...!
I CAN WALK. LET'S GO. I DON'T EVEN WANT ANY OF THEIR HAUNTED JEWELS.
THERE'S PLENTY OF CLEAN LOOT IN THE WORLD FOR YOU AND ME!
AYE, GIRL...
...THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN'T CONQUER...
...TOGETHER!
WE'LL HAVE OUR FEET ON A SHIP'S DECK BEFORE THE STYGIANS OPEN THEIR PORTS FOR THE TRADING SEASON...
AND THEN, BY CROM--
--WE'LL SHOW THE WORLD WHAT PLUNDERING MEANS!
FIN


CURTIS
MAY
75¢
SAVAGE TALES
FEATURING
CONAN
THE BARBARIAN
MARVEL
magazine group
MORE SAVAGE THAN EVER!
2 BLOCK-BUSTING CONAN THRILLERS
BONUS: MONSTER SIZE PIN-UP
PHOTOS, FEATURES, AND FEAR-FILLED FANTASY

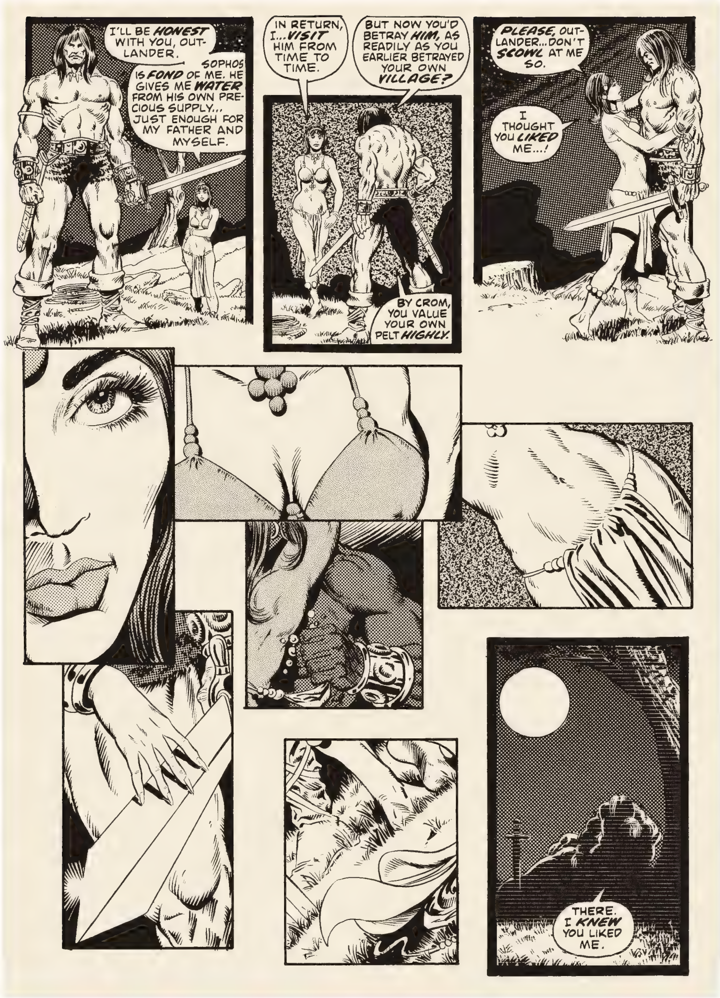
RIGHT
Savage Tales No. 4. Interior art, "Night of the Dark God." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, Gil Kane; inks, Neal Adams. May 1974.

When Windsor-Smith elected not to continue as the ongoing artist of *Savage Tales'* Conan feature, Thomas turned to Gil Kane. The artist had long been enamored of the barbarian, having gone so far as to strike a deal in the late '60s with the Howard estate to adapt the character on his own. That never happened, leaving the prolific Kane to enjoy drawing Conan where he could, in both the color comics and the black-and-white magazine once Marvel secured and expanded their rights to the character. "Night of the Dark God" was another of Kane and Thomas' pastiches—the first being "The Gods of Bal-Sagoth" in *Conan the Barbarian* No. 17—that adapted a Howard story by changing the main character (in this case Turlogh O'Brien) to Conan. Neal Adams provided the inks.


Night of the Dark God
ROY THOMAS SCRIPT
GIL KANE, NEAL ADAMS, & DIVERSE HANDS ART
PABLO MARCOS TONES
FREELY ADAPTED FROM THE STORY "THE DARK MAN" by ROBERT E. HOWARD CREATOR OF CONAN

OPPOSITE
Savage Tales No. 4. Cover. Neal Adams. May 1974.

Adams was another star artist who enjoyed flexing his talents in the magazine format, his painted cover every bit as savage as the series title promised.

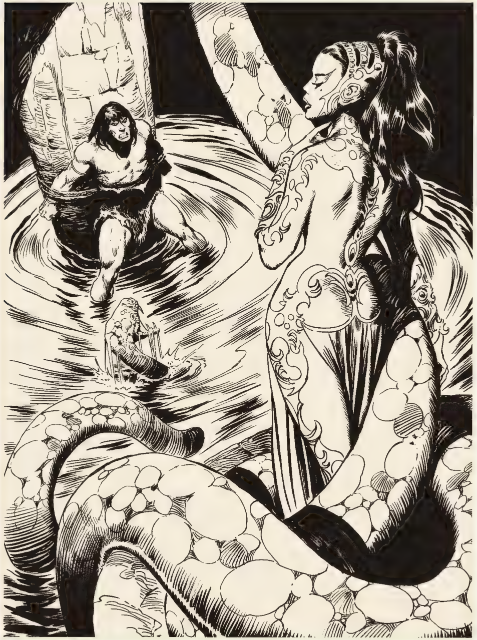

I'LL BE HONEST WITH YOU, OUTLANDER.
SOPHOS IS FOND OF ME. HE GIVES ME WATER FROM HIS OWN PRECIOUS SUPPLY... JUST ENOUGH FOR MY FATHER AND MYSELF.
IN RETURN, I...VISIT HIM FROM TIME TO TIME.
BUT NOW YOU'D BETRAY HIM, AS READILY AS YOU EARLIER BETRAYED YOUR OWN VILLAGE?
BY CROM, YOU VALUE YOUR OWN PELT HIGHLY.
PLEASE, OUTLANDER...DON'T SCOWL AT ME SO.
I THOUGHT YOU LIKED ME...!
THERE. I KNEW YOU LIKED ME.

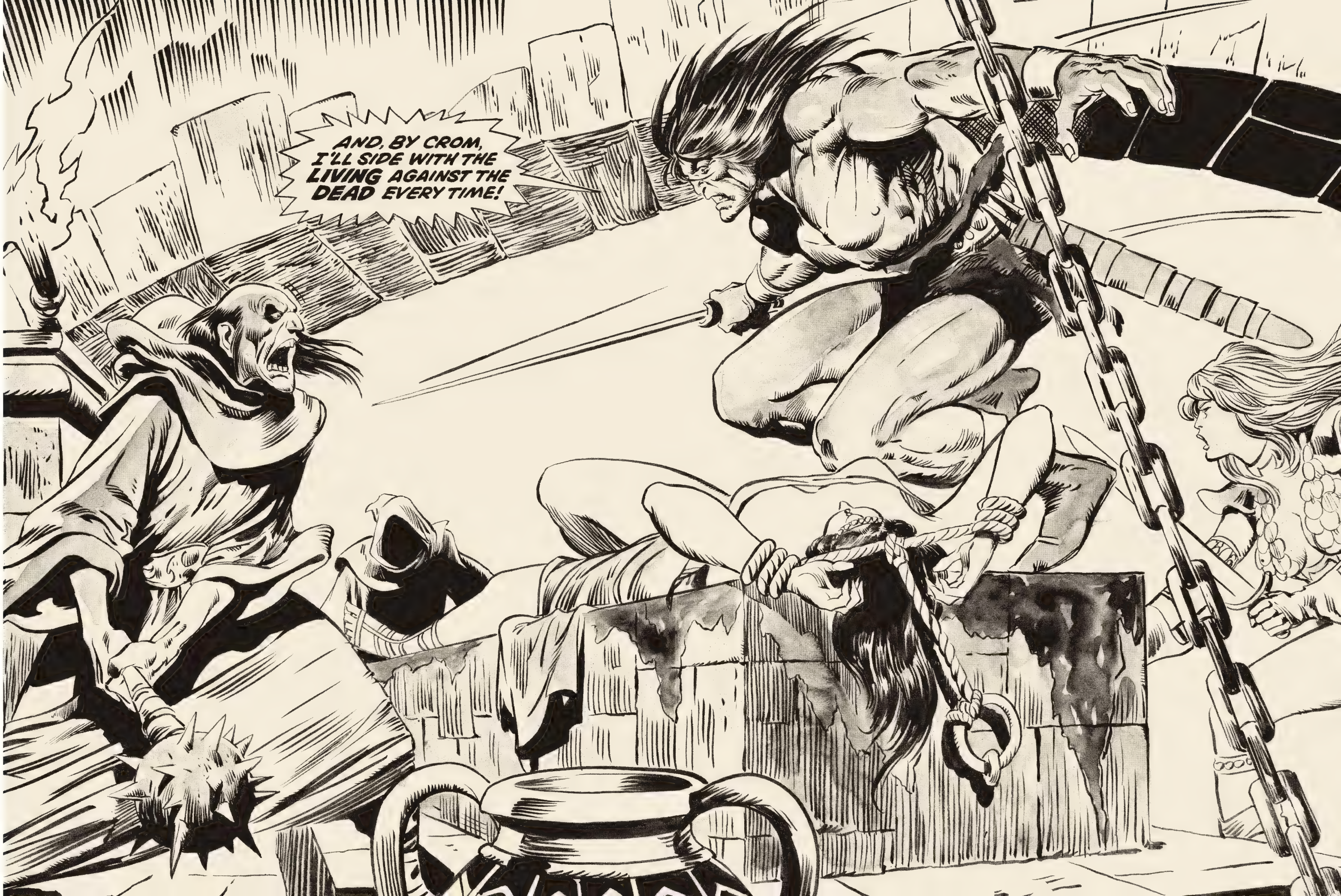
OPPOSITE
Savage Tales No. 5. Interior art, "The Secret of Skull River." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, Jim Starlin; inks, Al Milgrom. July 1974.

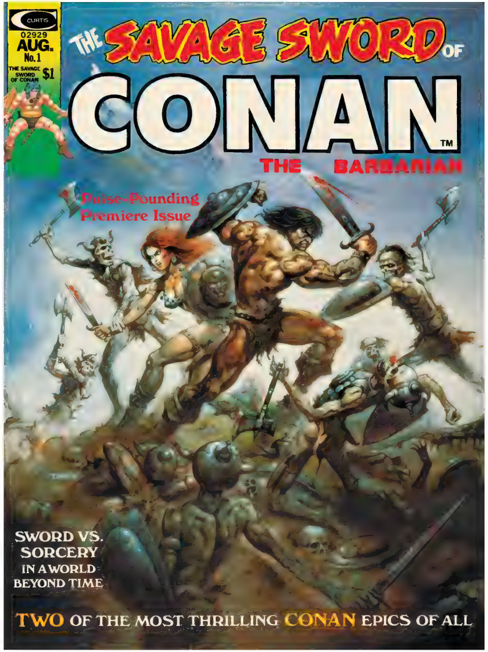
In the midst of his cosmic comics-defining work on *Captain Marvel*, a young Jim Starlin joined Thomas to adapt a plot by budding novelist John Jakes (*North and South*, the Kent Family Chronicles) full of evil magic users, grotesque monsters and a Code-defying approach to sensuality.

RIGHT
Marvel Comics Super Special No. 2. Pencils and inks, John Buscema. 1977.

During its three-year run, John Buscema had yet to draw the Conan feature in *Savage Tales* (though he had illustrated its Ka-Zar backup). Once Conan graduated to a new magazine, the artist who would come to define the character for generations would become a regular fixture in black-and-white—both in feature stories and numerous pinups. Ironically, his first story for *Savage Sword* was originally intended for *Conan the Barbarian*, but had its art hurriedly repurposed to launch the new magazine.




AND, BY CROM, I'LL SIDE WITH THE LIVING AGAINST THE DEAD EVERY TIME!


CURTIS
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No. 1
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
$1
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF
CONAN
TM
THE BARBARIAN
Pulse-Pounding
Premiere Issue
SWORD VS.
SORCERY
IN A WORLD
BEYOND TIME
TWO OF THE MOST THRILLING CONAN EPICS OF ALL

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 2. Pinup. Mike Zeck. October 1974.

Savage Sword was a wellspring of art by up-and-coming talents like Mike Zeck, often seeing their first published works as pinup illustrations gracing the magazine's frontispiece, table of contents and articles, as well as creator or theme-specific galleries.

ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 1. Cover. Boris Vallejo. August 1974.

The painted cover to *Savage Sword's* inaugural issue was by Boris Vallejo, a Peruvian painter following in the footsteps of immortal Conan artist Frank Frazetta with his ultramasculine painted representations of the barbarian and his world of fantasy. Vallejo's covers would grace eight of the magazine's covers in its early years.

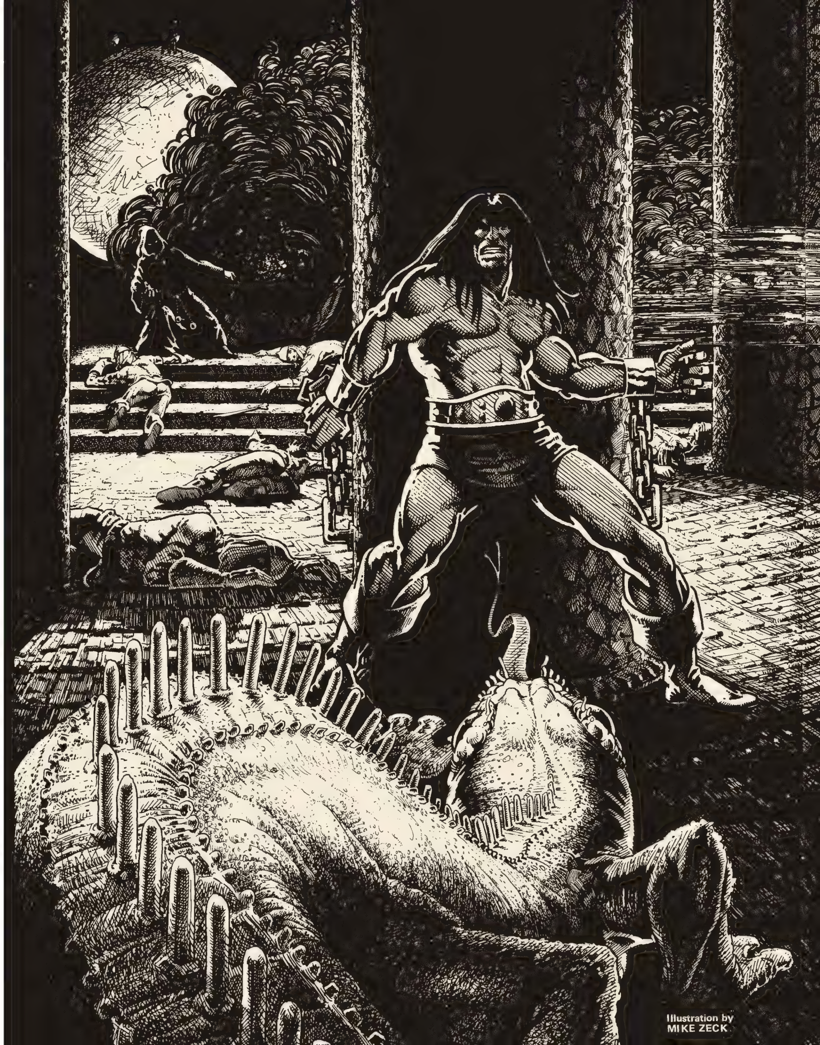
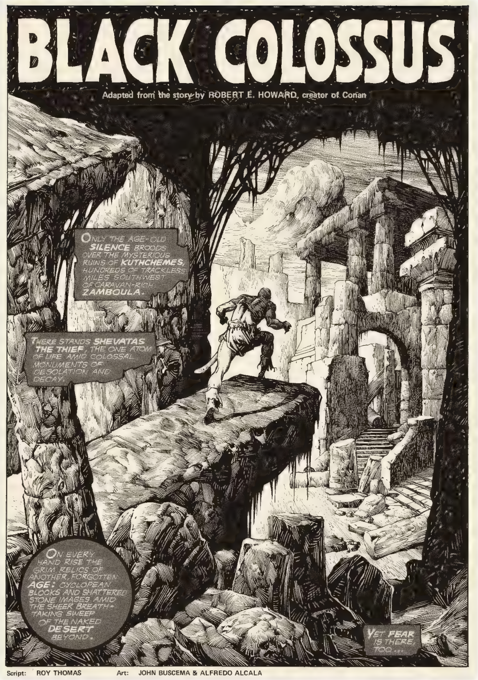


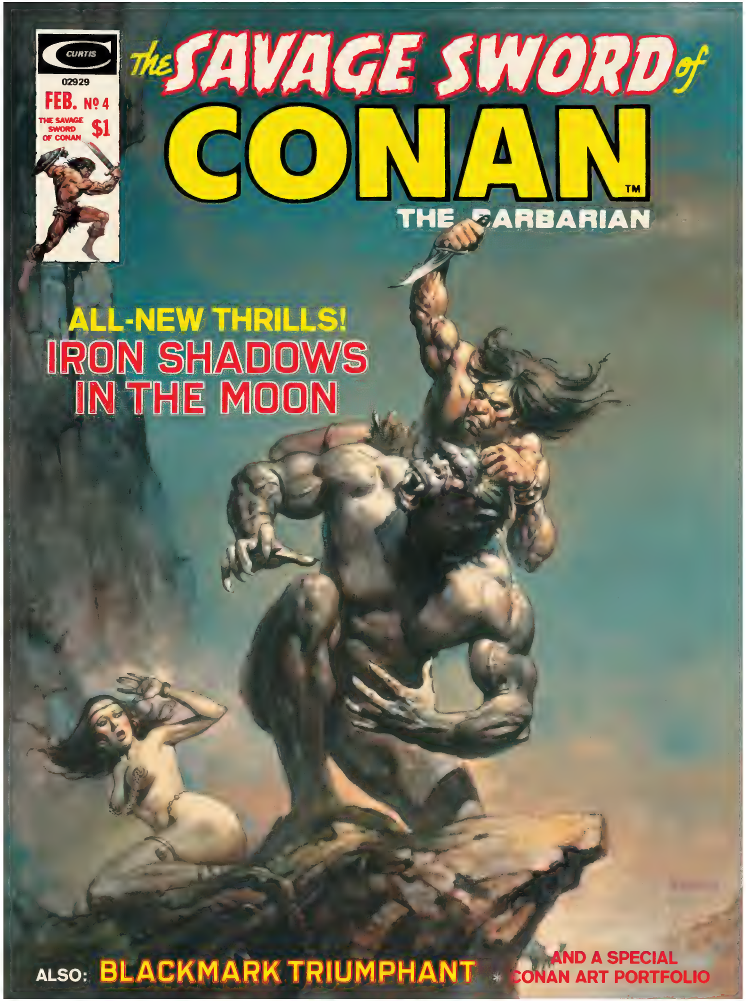
Illustration by
MIKE ZECK

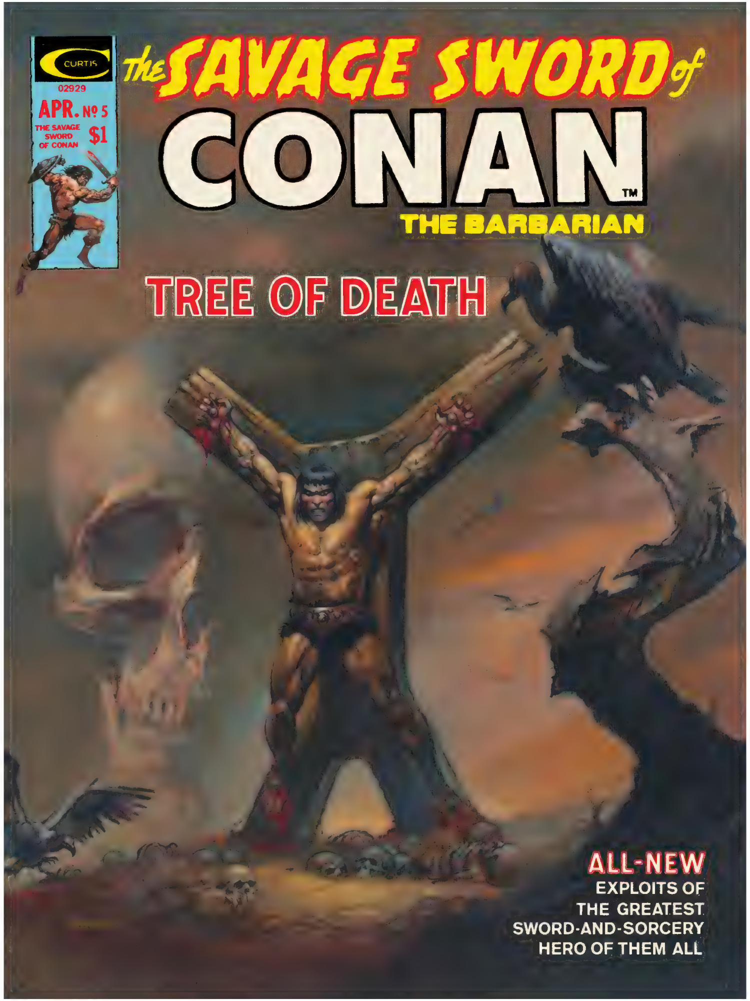

BLACK COLOSSUS
Adapted from the story by ROBERT E. HOWARD, creator of Conan
ONLY THE AGE-OLD SILENCE BROODS OVER THE MYSTERIOUS RUINS OF KUTHCHEMES, HUNDREDS OF TRACKLESS MILES SOUTHWEST OF CARAVAN-RICH ZAMBOULA.
THERE STANDS SHEVATAS THE THIEF, THE ONE ATOM OF LIFE AMID COLOSSAL MONUMENTS OF DESOLATION AND DECAY.
ON EVERY HAND RISE THE GRIM RELICS OF ANOTHER, FORGOTTEN AGE: CYCLOPEAN BLOCKS AND SHATTERED STONE IMAGES AMID THE SHEER BREATH-TAKING SWEEP OF THE NAKED DESERT BEYOND.
YET FEAR IS THERE TOO...
Script: ROY THOMAS
Art: JOHN BUSCEMA & ALFREDO ALCALA

LEFT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 2.
Interior art, "Black Colossus." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Alfredo Alcala. October 1974.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 4.
Cover. Boris Vallejo. February 1975.

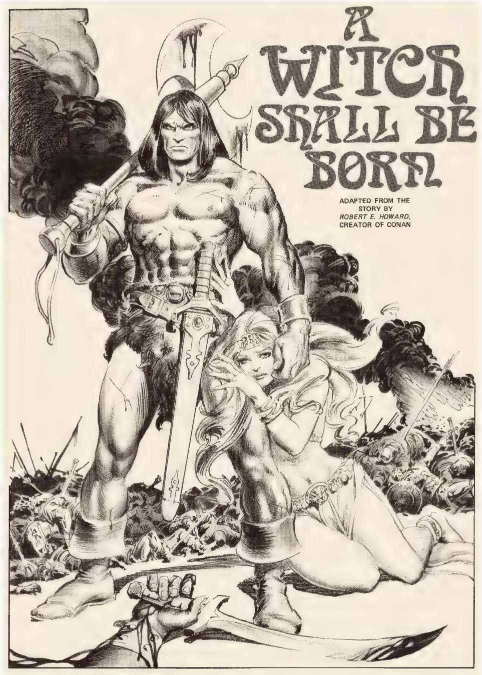
Roy Thomas selected Filipino artist Alfredo Alcala to embellish the work of John Buscema in "Black Colossus," an adaptation of a story by Howard that kicked off the retelling of Conan's canon in *Savage Sword* in roughly chronological order. In a bid to differentiate Buscema's magazine work from his familiar color comics, Thomas felt Alcala's more detailed touches would be a huge hit with readers—and they very much were, though not with Buscema.


CURTIS
02929
FEB. Nº 4
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
$1
the SAVAGE SWORD of
CONAN™
THE BARBARIAN
ALL-NEW THRILLS!
IRON SHADOWS IN THE MOON
ALSO: BLACKMARK TRIUMPHANT
AND A SPECIAL CONAN ART PORTFOLIO

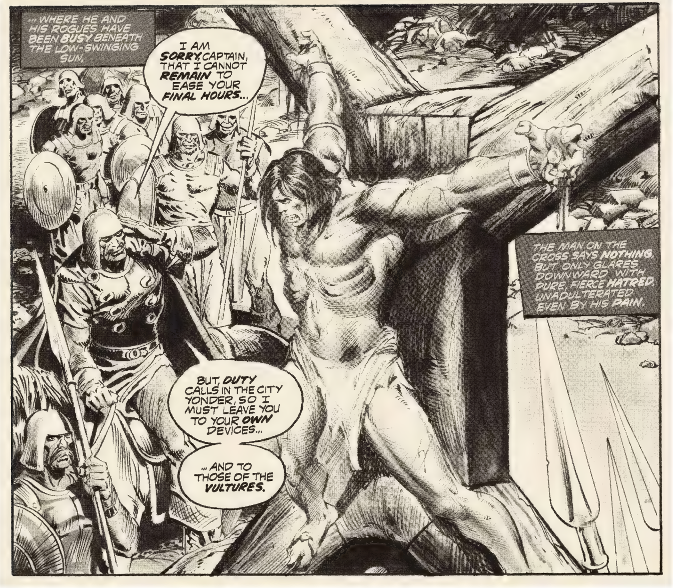

CURTIS
02929
APR. No 5
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
$1
The SAVAGE SWORD of
CONAN
THE BARBARIAN
TM
TREE OF DEATH
ALL-NEW
EXPLOITS OF
THE GREATEST
SWORD-AND-SORCERY
HERO OF THEM ALL

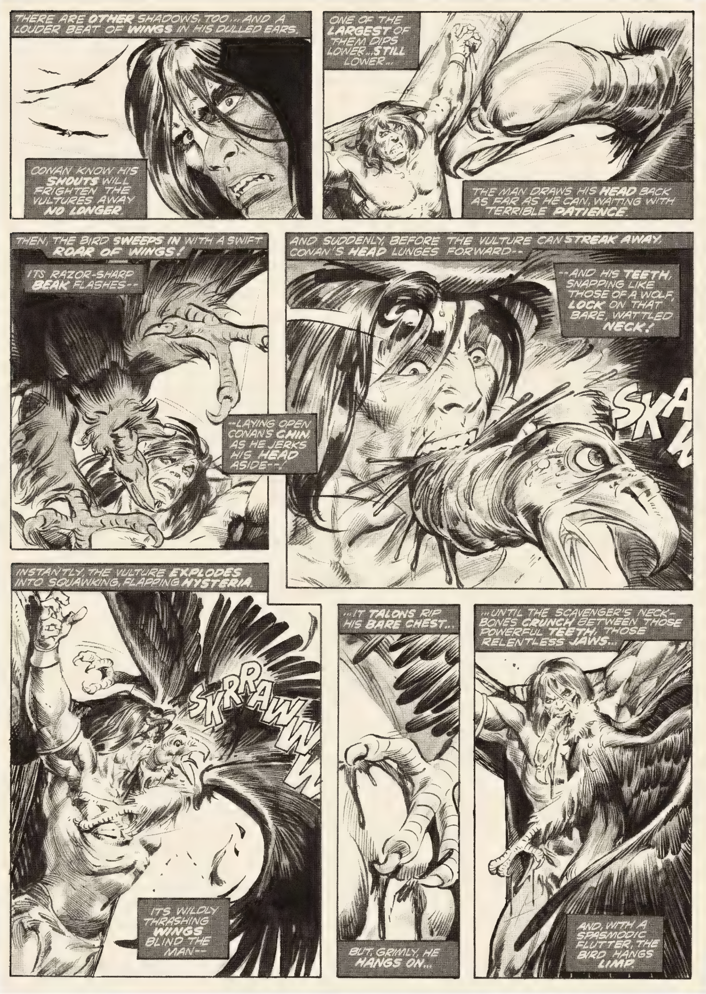
OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 5. Cover. John Buscema, Boris Vallejo. April 1975.

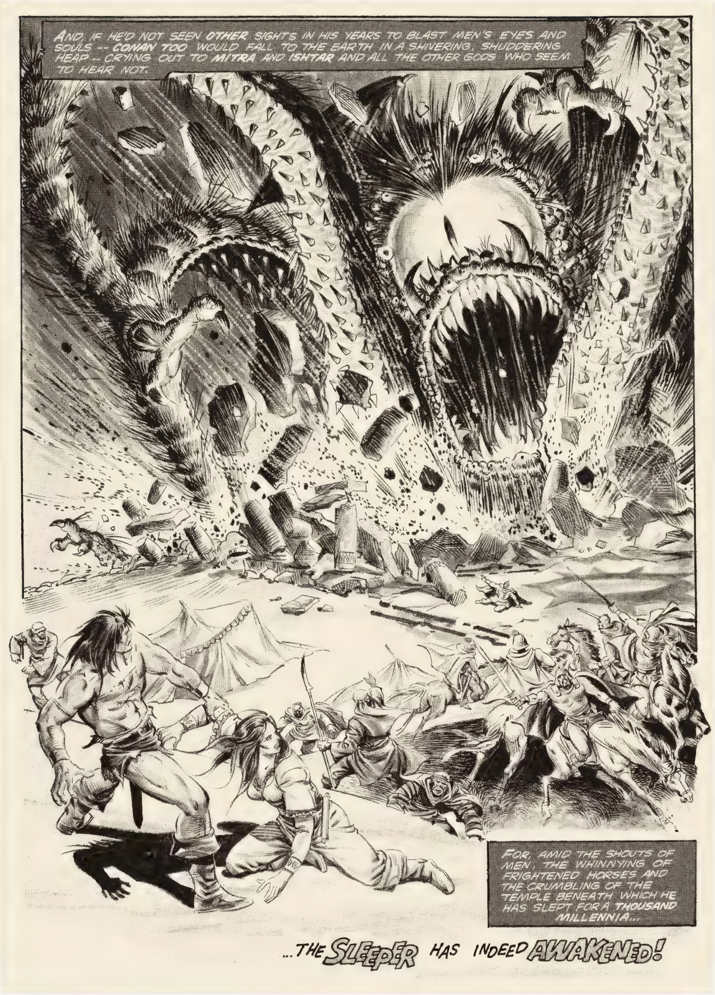
RIGHT AND FOLLOWING SPREAD
Savage Sword of Conan No. 5. Interior art, "A Witch Shall Be Born." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, The Tribe. April 1975.


A WITCH SHALL BE BORN
ADAPTED FROM THE STORY BY ROBERT E. HOWARD, CREATOR OF CONAN

The crucifixion of Conan—easily one of the most legendary scenes in the barbarian's long saga of tales—transfixed readers on the cover of *Savage Sword* No. 5. The cover was a collaboration of sorts between Buscema, who painted the figure on the cross before souring on the job, and Vallejo, who finished the piece with the background details.

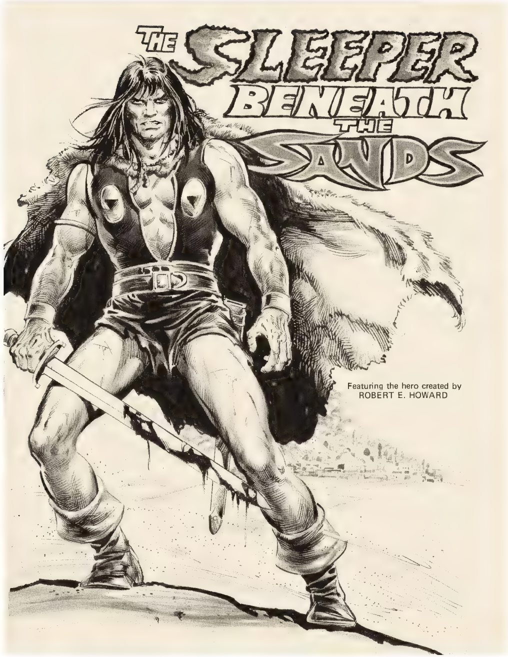

...WHERE HE AND HIS ROGUES HAVE BEEN BUSY BENEATH THE LOW-SWINGING SUN.
I AM SORRY, CAPTAIN, THAT I CANNOT REMAIN TO EASE YOUR FINAL HOURS...
THE MAN ON THE CROSS SAYS NOTHING, BUT ONLY GLARES DOWNWARD WITH PURE, FIERCE HATRED, UNADULTERATED EVEN BY HIS PAIN.
BUT, DUTY CALLS IN THE CITY YONDER, SO I MUST LEAVE YOU TO YOUR OWN DEVICES...
...AND TO THOSE OF THE VULTURES.

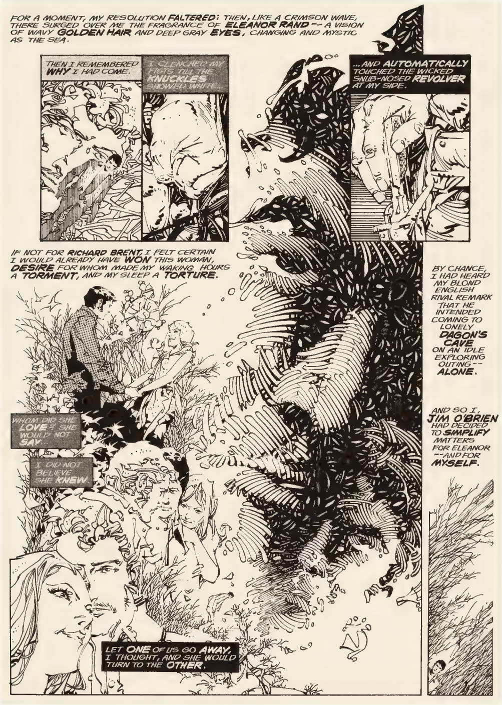

THERE ARE OTHER SHADOWS, TOO -- AND A LOUDER BEAT OF WINGS IN HIS DULLED EARS.
CONAN KNOW HIS SHOUTS WILL FRIGHTEN THE VULTURES AWAY NO LONGER.
ONE OF THE LARGEST OF THEM DIPS LOWER... STILL LOWER...
THE MAN DRAWS HIS HEAD BACK AS FAR AS HE CAN, WAITING WITH TERRIBLE PATIENCE.
THEN, THE BIRD SWEEPS IN WITH A SWIFT ROAR OF WINGS!
ITS RAZOR-SHARP BEAK FLASHES--
--LAYING OPEN CONAN'S CHIN AS HE JERKS HIS HEAD ASIDE--!
AND SUDDENLY, BEFORE THE VULTURE CAN STREAK AWAY, CONAN'S HEAD LUNGES FORWARD--
--AND HIS TEETH, SNAPPING LIKE THOSE OF A WOLF, LOCK ON THAT BARE, WATTLED NECK!
SKAW
INSTANTLY, THE VULTURE EXPLODES INTO SQUAWKING, FLAPPING HYSTERIA.
SKRRAWWW
ITS WILDLY THRASHING WINGS BLIND THE MAN--
...IT TALONS RIP HIS BARE CHEST...
BUT, GRIMLY, HE HANGS ON...
...UNTIL THE SCAVENGER'S NECK-BONES CRUNCH BETWEEN THOSE POWERFUL TEETH, THOSE RELENTLESS JAWS...
AND, WITH A SPASMODIC FLUTTER, THE BIRD HANGS LIMP.

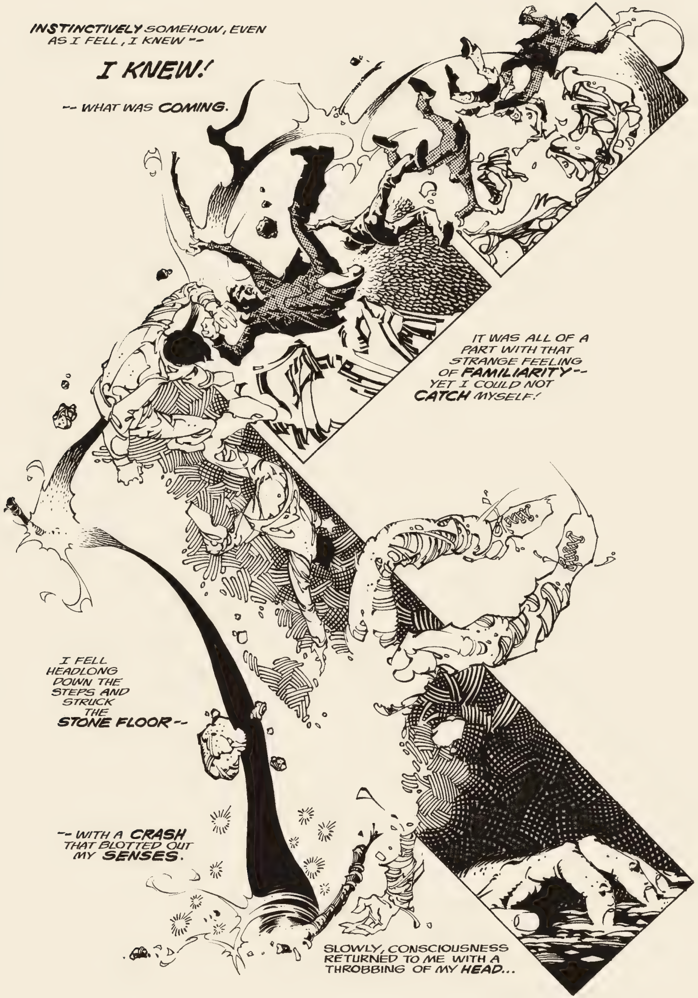

AND, IF HE'D NOT SEEN OTHER SIGHTS IN HIS YEARS TO BLAST MEN'S EYES AND SOULS -- CONAN TOO WOULD FALL TO THE EARTH IN A SHIVERING, SHUDDERING HEAP -- CRYING OUT TO MITRA AND ISHTAR AND ALL THE OTHER GODS WHO SEEM TO HEAR NOT.
FOR, AMID THE SHOUTS OF MEN, THE WHINNYING OF FRIGHTENED HORSES AND THE CRUMBLING OF THE TEMPLE BENEATH WHICH HE HAS SLEPT FOR A THOUSAND MILLENNIA...
...THE SLEEPER HAS INDEED AWAKENED!

OPPOSITE AND BELOW
Savage Sword of Conan No. 6. Interior art, "The Sleeper Beneath the Sands." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils and inks, Sonny Trinidad. June 1975.

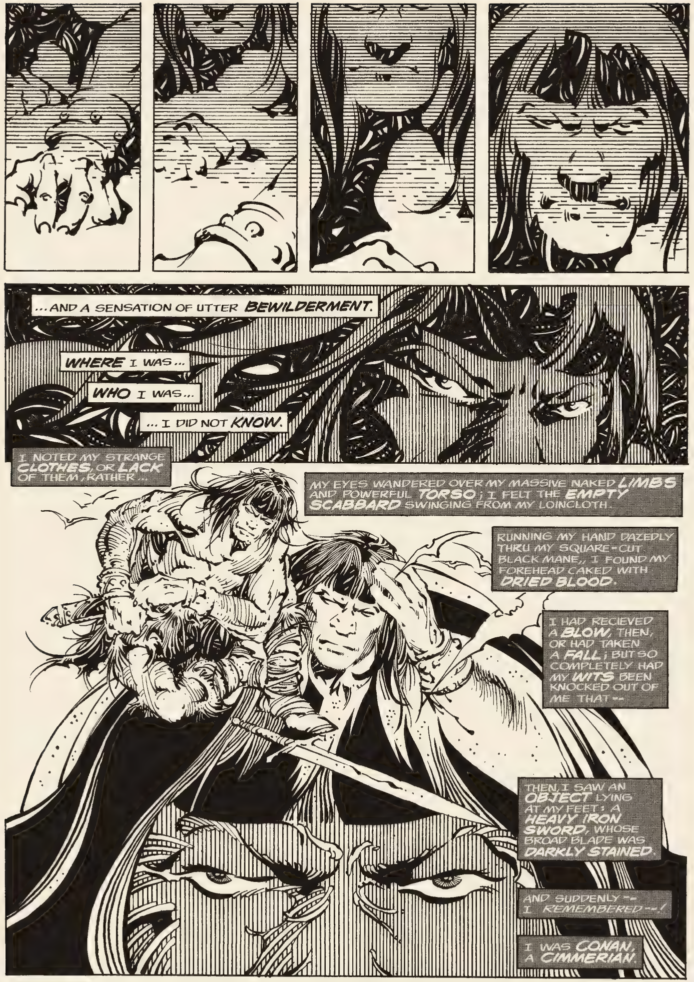
Another Filipino artist, Sonny Trinidad, worked out of artist Tony DeZuniga's studio in Manila along with several other talented illustrators who helped Marvel ramp up to meet the page count demands of its rapidly expanding magazine line. He collaborated with Thomas on "The Sleeper Beneath the Sands," an original story by Thomas meant to serve as a sequel to "A Witch Shall Be Born."

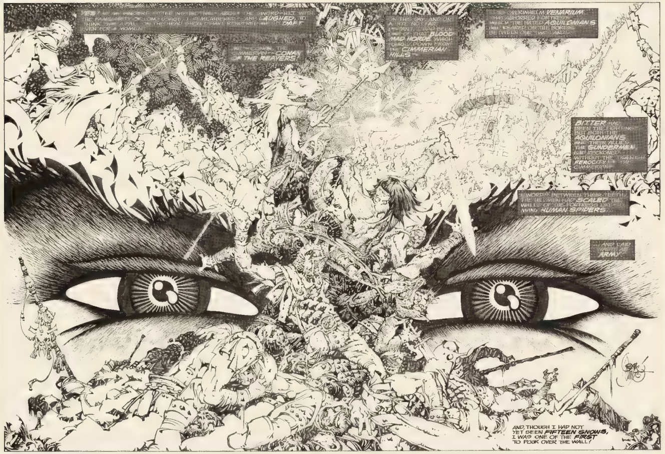

THE SLEEPER BENEATH THE SANDS
Featuring the hero created by
ROBERT E. HOWARD


FOR A MOMENT, MY RESOLUTION FALTERED; THEN, LIKE A CRIMSON WAVE, THERE SURGED OVER ME THE FRAGRANCE OF ELEANOR RAND -- A VISION OF WAVY GOLDEN HAIR AND DEEP GRAY EYES, CHANGING AND MYSTIC AS THE SEA.
THEN I REMEMBERED WHY I HAD COME.
I CLENCHED MY FISTS TILL THE KNUCKLES SHOWED WHITE...
...AND AUTOMATICALLY TOUCHED THE WICKED SNUB-NOSED REVOLVER AT MY SIDE.
IF NOT FOR RICHARD BRENT, I FELT CERTAIN I WOULD ALREADY HAVE WON THIS WOMAN, DESIRE FOR WHOM MADE MY WAKING HOURS A TORMENT, AND MY SLEEP A TORTURE.
BY CHANCE, I HAD HEARD MY BLOND ENGLISH RIVAL REMARK THAT HE INTENDED COMING TO LONELY DAGON'S CAVE ON AN IDLE EXPLORING OUTING -- ALONE.
WHOM DID SHE LOVE? SHE WOULD NOT SAY..
I DID NOT BELIEVE SHE KNEW.
AND SO I, JIM O'BRIEN HAD DECIDED TO SIMPLIFY MATTERS FOR ELEANOR -- AND FOR MYSELF.
LET ONE OF US GO AWAY, I THOUGHT, AND SHE WOULD TURN TO THE OTHER.

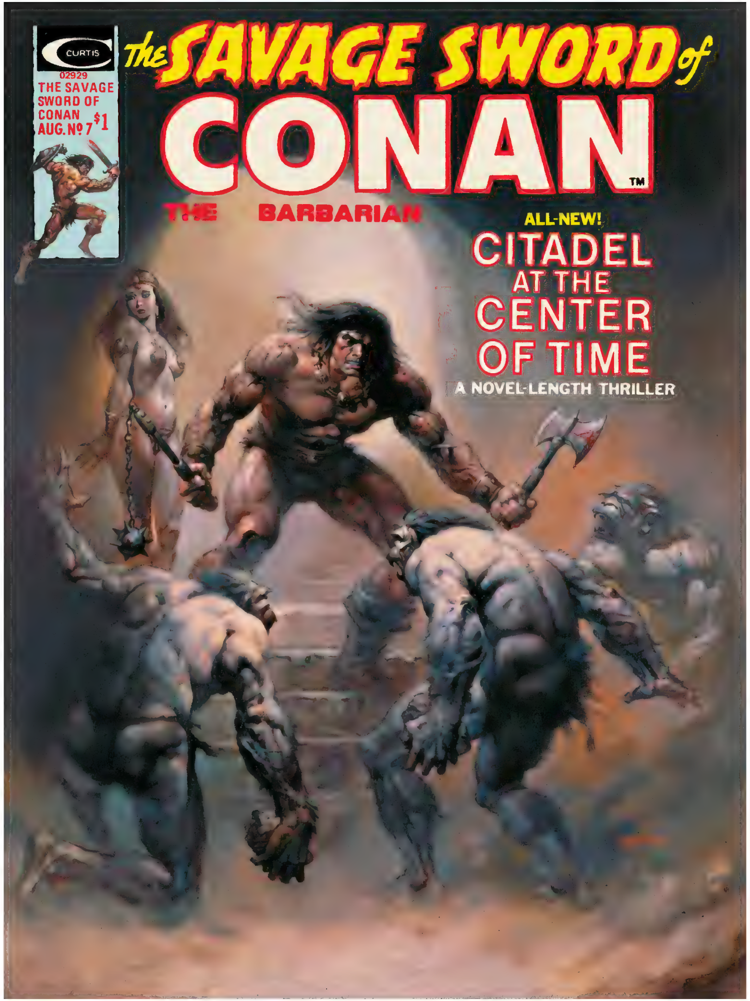

INSTINCTIVELY SOMEHOW, EVEN AS I FELL, I KNEW --
I KNEW!
-- WHAT WAS COMING.
IT WAS ALL OF A PART WITH THAT STRANGE FEELING OF FAMILIARITY -- YET I COULD NOT CATCH MYSELF!
I FELL HEADLONG DOWN THE STEPS AND STRUCK THE STONE FLOOR --
-- WITH A CRASH THAT BLOTTED OUT MY SENSES.
SLOWLY, CONSCIOUSNESS RETURNED TO ME WITH A THROBBING OF MY HEAD...

THIS AND FOLLOWING SPREAD
Savage Sword of Conan No. 6. Interior art, "People of the Dark." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils and inks, Alex Niño. June 1975.


...AND A SENSATION OF UTTER BEWILDERMENT.
WHERE I WAS...
WHO I WAS...
...I DID NOT KNOW.
I NOTED MY STRANGE CLOTHES, OR LACK OF THEM, RATHER...
MY EYES WANDERED OVER MY MASSIVE NAKED LIMBS AND POWERFUL TORSO; I FELT THE EMPTY SCABBARD SWINGING FROM MY LOINCLOTH.
RUNNING MY HAND DAZEDLY THRU MY SQUARE-CUT BLACK MANE, I FOUND MY FOREHEAD CAKED WITH DRIED BLOOD.
I HAD RECIEVED A BLOW, THEN, OR HAD TAKEN A FALL; BUT SO COMPLETELY HAD MY WITS BEEN KNOCKED OUT OF ME THAT--
THEN I SAW AN OBJECT LYING AT MY FEET: A HEAVY IRON SWORD, WHOSE BROAD BLADE WAS DARKLY STAINED.
AND SUDDENLY-- I REMEMBERED--!
I WAS CONAN, A CIMMERIAN.


THE FAMILIARITY OF LONG USAGE, I REMEMBERED-- AND LAUGHED, TO THINK A FALL ON THE HEAD SHOULD HAVE RENDERED ME SO DAFT EVEN FOR A MOMENT.
CIMMERIAN-- CONAN OF THE REAVERS!
ON THIS DAY, AND ON A SITE NOT FAR I HAD BEEN OF THAT BLOOD-MAD HORDE WHICH POURED DOWN FROM CIMMERIAN HILLS--
OVERWHELM VENARIUM, THAT ABHORRED FORTRESS THE HATED AQUILONIANS REARED ON THE BORDER BETWEEN OUR TWO LANDS.
BITTER HAD BEEN THE FIGHTING, BUT BOTH THE AQUILONIANS AND THEIR ALLIES, THE GUNDERMEN, HAD RECKONED WITHOUT THE TIGERISH FEROCITY OF THE CIMMERIANS.
WORDS BETWEEN THEIR TEETH THE HILLMEN HAD SCALED THE WALLS OF THE FORTRESS LIKE SO MANY HUMAN SPIDERS...
...AND LAID WASTE AN ARMY.
AND THOUGH I HAD NOT YET SEEN FIFTEEN SNOWS, I WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TO POUR OVER THE WALL!

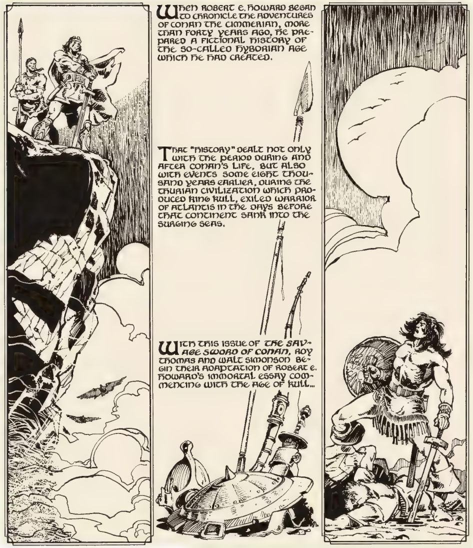
Alex Niño's atmospheric artwork in "The People of the Dark" was based on an adaptation of a Conan story by Howard, though not the Conan that Marvel readers had come to love in huge, comics-buying numbers, but a different character altogether. That did not stop Roy Thomas from folding the Cimmerian into the story and, with Niño's lovely visuals, creating a unique and memorable entry in the *Savage Sword* artistic legacy.

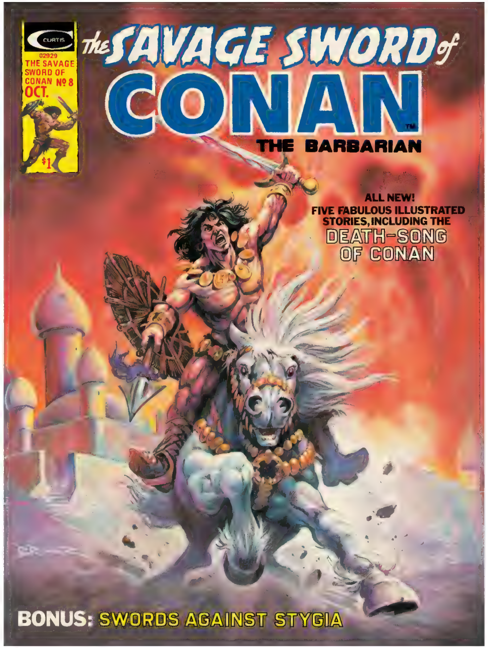

CURTIS
02929
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
AUG. Nº 7
$1
The SAVAGE SWORD of
CONAN
TM
THE BARBARIAN
ALL-NEW!
CITADEL AT THE CENTER OF TIME
A NOVEL-LENGTH THRILLER

Some of Walter Simonson's earliest work in comics was found in *Savage Sword of Conan*. He illustrated six stories of Hyborian pseudo-history based on an essay by Howard and lovingly adapted by Thomas. In these works, Simonson gave glimpses of the visionary fantasy elements he would bring to his groundbreaking work on *Thor* in the ensuing decade.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 7.
Cover. Boris Vallejo. August 1975.

RIGHT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 7.
Interior art, "The Hyborian Age, Chapter One: The Pre-Cataclysmic Age." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils and inks, Walter Simonson. August 1975.


When Robert E. Howard began to chronicle the adventures of Conan the Cimmerian, more than forty years ago, he prepared a fictional history of the so-called Hyborian Age which he had created.
That "history" dealt not only with the period during and after Conan's life, but also with events some eight thousand years earlier, during the Thurian civilization which produced King Kull, exiled warrior of Atlantis in the days before that continent sank into the surging seas.
With this issue of The Savage Sword of Conan, Roy Thomas and Walt Simonson begin their adaptation of Robert E. Howard's immortal essay commencing with the Age of Kull...

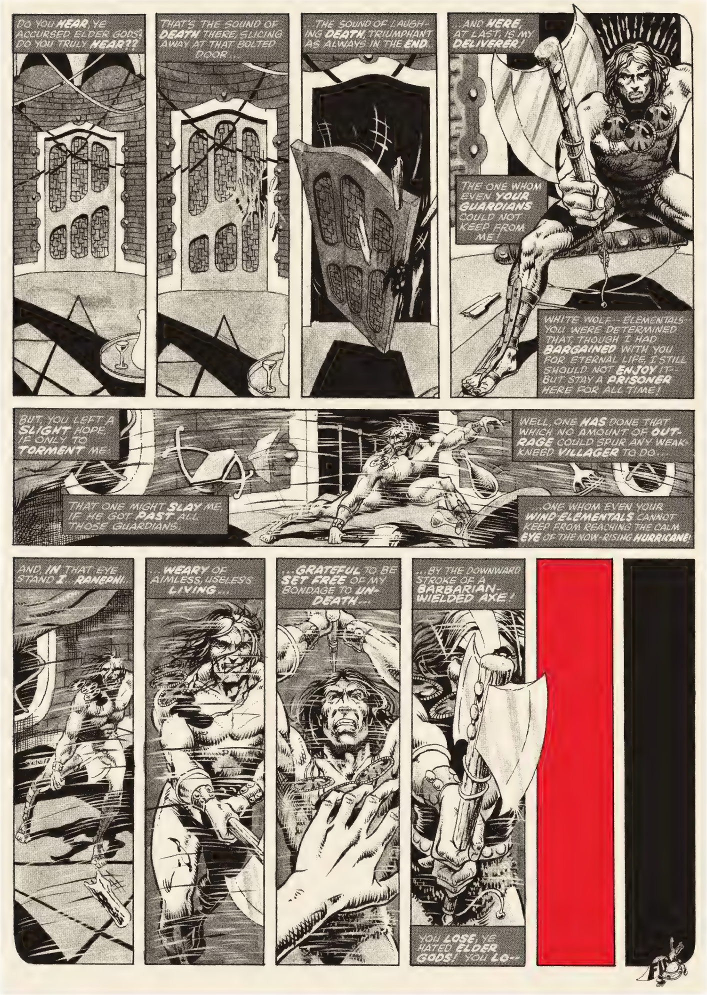

CURTIS
02929
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN No 8
OCT.
$1
The SAVAGE SWORD of CONAN THE BARBARIAN
ALL NEW!
FIVE FABULOUS ILLUSTRATED STORIES, INCLUDING THE DEATH-SONG OF CONAN
BONUS: SWORDS AGAINST STYGIA

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 8. Interior art, "The Forever Phial." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils and inks, Tim Conrad. October 1975.

Though pushing the boundaries of violence and nudity, in its early years, *Savage Sword* refrained from explicit renderings of ultraviolence. Artist Tim Conrad cleverly worked around depicting the skull-cleaving of Conan's quarry by reserving space for a single red stripe of color to indicate flowing blood—and a stripe of black to indicate the suddenness of death. It would be the only color applied to an interior story in the magazine's run.

ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 8. Cover. Frank Brunner. October 1975.

Frank Brunner's swashbuckling cover art was one of his few, precious contributions to Conan lore. The renowned fantasy illustrator had a career in comics as remarkable as it was brief, with a milestone stint drawing the Marvel sorcerer *Doctor Strange*.

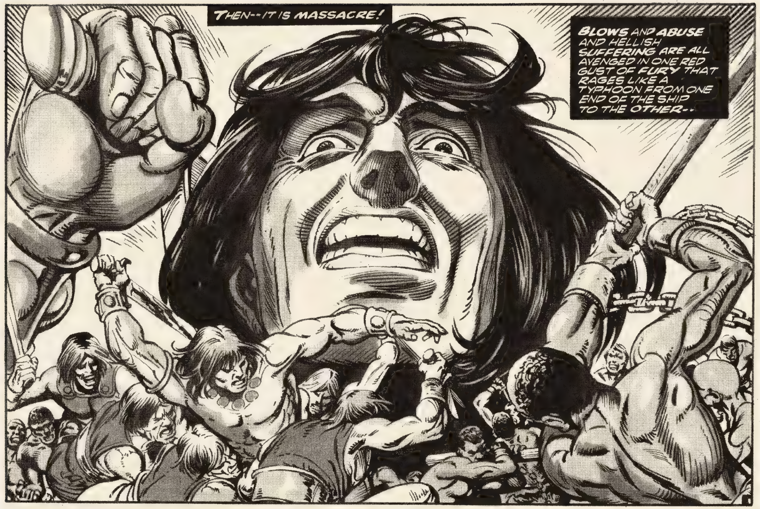

DO YOU HEAR, YE ACCURSED ELDER GODS! DO YOU TRULY HEAR??
THAT'S THE SOUND OF DEATH THERE, SLICING AWAY AT THAT BOLTED DOOR...
...THE SOUND OF LAUGHING DEATH, TRIUMPHANT AS ALWAYS IN THE END.
...AND HERE, AT LAST, IS MY DELIVERER!
THE ONE WHOM EVEN YOUR GUARDIANS COULD NOT KEEP FROM ME!
WHITE WOLF--ELEMENTALS--YOU WERE DETERMINED THAT, THOUGH I HAD BARGAINED WITH YOU FOR ETERNAL LIFE, I STILL SHOULD NOT ENJOY IT--BUT STAY A PRISONER HERE FOR ALL TIME!
BUT, YOU LEFT A SLIGHT HOPE, IF ONLY TO TORMENT ME:
THAT ONE MIGHT SLAY ME, IF HE GOT PAST ALL THOSE GUARDIANS.
WELL, ONE HAS DONE THAT WHICH NO AMOUNT OF OUTRAGE COULD SPUR ANY WEAK-KNEED VILLAGER TO DO...
...ONE WHOM EVEN YOUR WIND-ELEMENTALS CANNOT KEEP FROM REACHING THE CALM EYE OF THE NOW-RISING HURRICANE!
AND, IN THAT EYE STAND I...RANEPHI..
...WEARY OF AIMLESS, USELESS LIVING...
...GRATEFUL TO BE SET FREE OF MY BONDAGE TO UN-DEATH...
...BY THE DOWNWARD STROKE OF A BARBARIAN-WIELDED AXE!
YOU LOSE, YE HATED ELDER GODS! YOU LO--

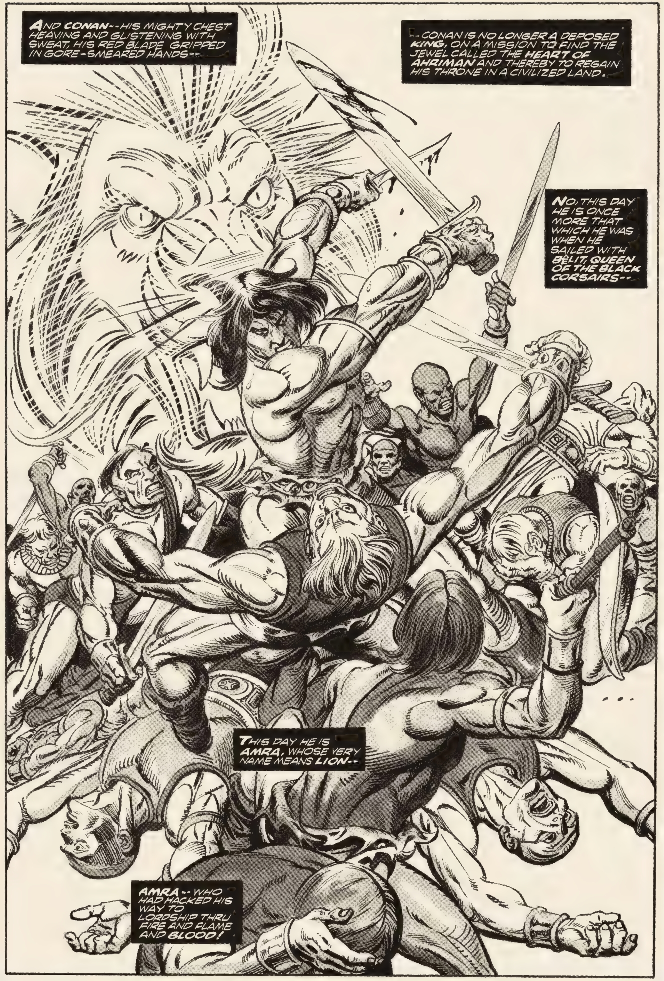
BELOW AND OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 8. Interior art, "Corsairs Against Stygia." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, Gil Kane; inks, Yong Montano. October 1975.

Readers would need to have read the first four issues of *Conan the Barbarian's* sister title, *Giant-Size Conan*, to have been up to speed on *Savage Sword* No. 8's "Corsairs Against Stygia" by Thomas and Kane. With the cancellation of the Giant-Size line, there was no better place to run the fifth and penultimate chapter of the storyline, which featured stunning black-and-white visuals by Kane.

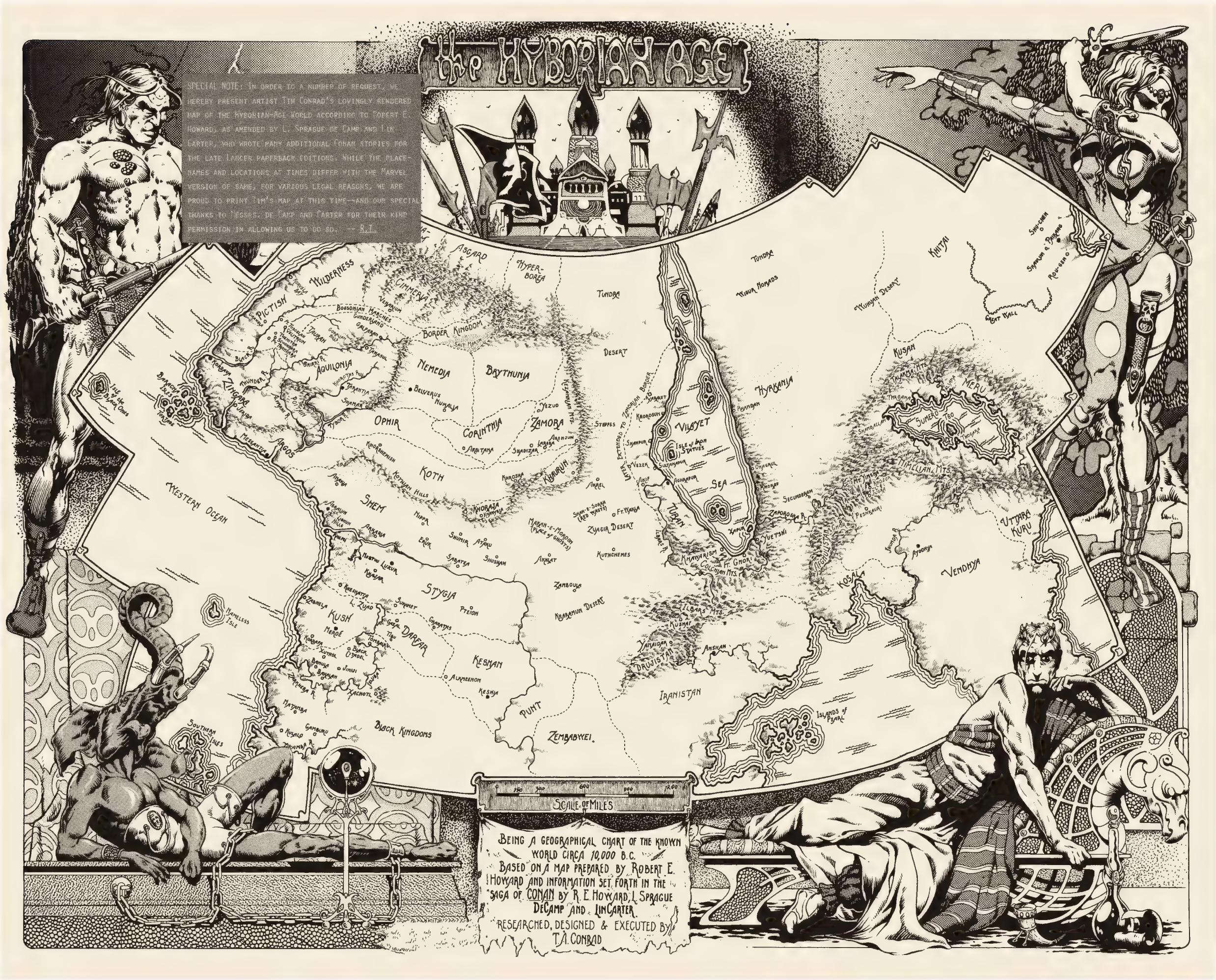
PAGES 44-45
Savage Sword of Conan No. 9. Interior art. "The Hyborian Age" map. Tim Conrad. December 1975.

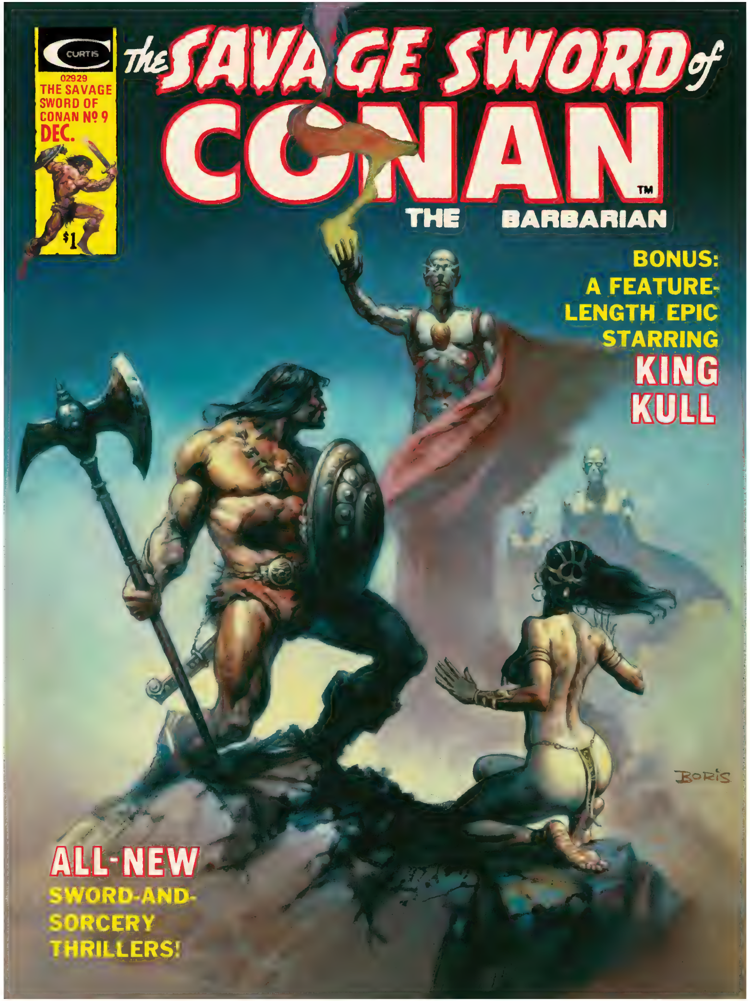
Conrad updated the primitive map of Hyboria by Barry Windsor-Smith that had perennially graced the letters pages of *Conan the Barbarian*; his was a far more expansive and finely detailed vision of Hyboria, circa 10,000 BC. Mimicking the geographical forms of Africa, Europe and the subcontinent of Asia, it incorporated the post-Howard development of the Conan mythos by writers L. Sprague de Camp and Lin Carter.

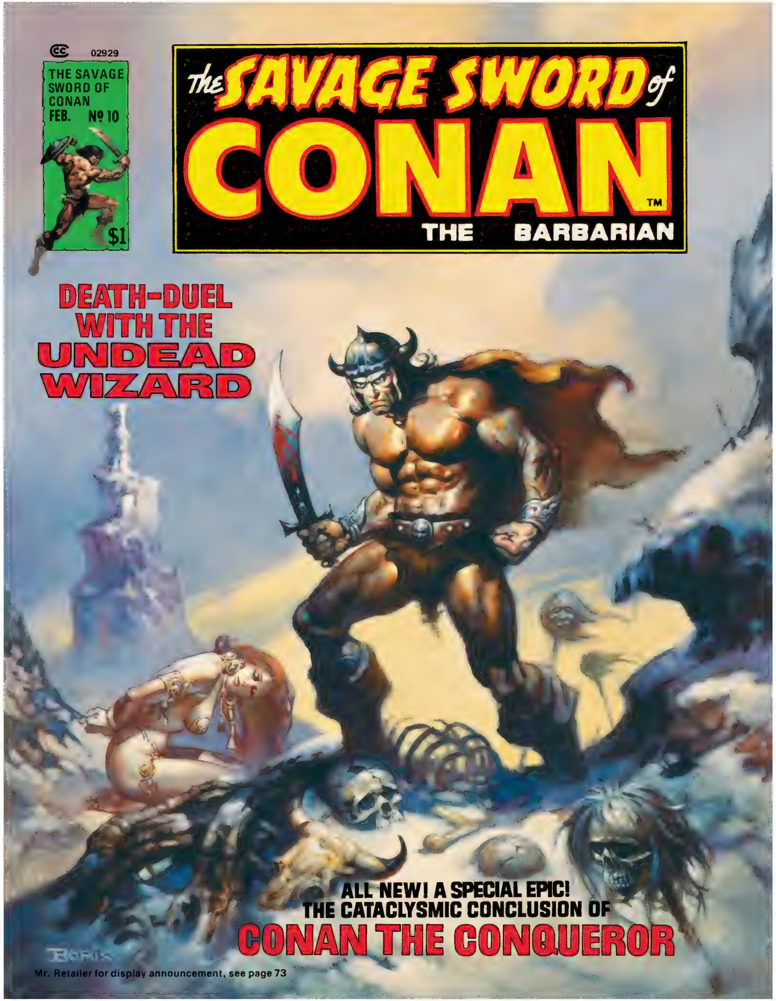

THEN--IT IS MASSACRE!
BLOWS AND ABUSE AND HELLISH SUFFERING ARE ALL AVENGED IN ONE RED GUST OF FURY THAT RAGES LIKE A TYPHOON FROM ONE END OF THE SHIP TO THE OTHER--


AND CONAN--HIS MIGHTY CHEST HEAVING AND GLISTENING WITH SWEAT, HIS RED BLADE GRIPPED IN GORE-SMEARED HANDS--
--CONAN IS NO LONGER A DEPOSED KING, ON A MISSION TO FIND THE JEWEL CALLED THE HEART OF AHRIMAN AND THEREBY TO REGAIN HIS THRONE IN A CIVILIZED LAND.
NO, THIS DAY HE IS ONCE MORE THAT WHICH HE WAS WHEN HE SAILED WITH BÊLIT, QUEEN OF THE BLACK CORSAIRS--
THIS DAY HE IS AMRA, WHOSE VERY NAME MEANS LION--
AMRA--WHO HAD HACKED HIS WAY TO LORDSHIP THRU FIRE AND FLAME AND BLOOD!

SPECIAL NOTE: IN ORDER TO A NUMBER OF REQUEST, WE HEREBY PRESENT ARTIST TIM CONRAD'S LOVINGLY RENDERED MAP OF THE HYBORIAN-AGE WORLD ACCORDING TO ROBERT E. HOWARD, AS AMENDED BY L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP AND LIN CARTER, WHO WROTE MANY ADDITIONAL CONAN STORIES FOR THE LATE LANCER PAPERBACK EDITIONS. WHILE THE PLACE-NAMES AND LOCATIONS AT TIMES DIFFER WITH THE MARVEL VERSION OF SAME, FOR VARIOUS LEGAL REASONS, WE ARE PROUD TO PRINT TIM'S MAP AT THIS TIME--AND OUR SPECIAL THANKS TO MESSRS. DE CAMP AND CARTER FOR THEIR KIND PERMISSION IN ALLOWING US TO DO SO. -- R.T.


The Hyborian Age
Asgard
Hyperborea
Wilderness
Pictish
Cimmeria
Vanaheim
Bossonian Marches
Gunderland
Border Kingdom
Salt Marsh
Tundra
Desert
Nemedia
Belverus
Numalia
Brythunia
Aquilonia
Tarantia
Shamar
Zingara
Thunder R.
Isle of the Black Ones
Barachan Isles
Messantia
Argos
Ophir
Corinthia
Arbitana
Zamora
Yezud
Shadizar
Arenjun
Khoraja
Koth
Khorshemish
Kothian Hills
Shem
Asgalun
Anakia
Nippr
Eruk
Shushan
Western Ocean
Stygia
Luxur
Khemi
Sukhmet
Pteion
Kush
Meroë
Darfar
Keshan
Alkmeenon
Punt
Zembabwei
Black Kingdoms
Southern Isles
Nameless Isle
Zuagir Desert
Kuthchemes
Zamboula
Kharamun Desert
Shem-e-Sorkh (Red Waste)
Makan-e-Mordan (Place of Ghosts)
Steppes
Vilayet
Sea
Isle of Iron Statues
Sultanapur
Aghrapur
Turan
Khawarizm
Ft. Ghori
Colchian Mts.
Ilbars Mts.
Kushaf
Yamaidan
Drujistan
Anshan
Iranistan
Islands of Pearl
Hyrkania
Tundra
Kuigar Nomads
Khitai
Great Wall
Kusan
Meru
Sumeru Tso
Himelian Mts.
Zaporoska R.
Secunderam
Peshkhauri
Jhelai
Kosala
Vendhya
Ayodhya
Uttara Kuru
Scale of Miles
150
300
600
900
1200
Being a geographical chart of the known world circa 10,000 B.C.
Based on a map prepared by Robert E. Howard and information set forth in the saga of CONAN by R. E. Howard, L. Sprague DeCamp and Lin Carter.
Researched, designed & executed by T.A. Conrad


CURTIS
02929
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN Nº 9
DEC.
$1
The SAVAGE SWORD of CONAN™ THE BARBARIAN
BONUS: A FEATURE-LENGTH EPIC STARRING KING KULL
ALL-NEW SWORD-AND-SORCERY THRILLERS!
BORIS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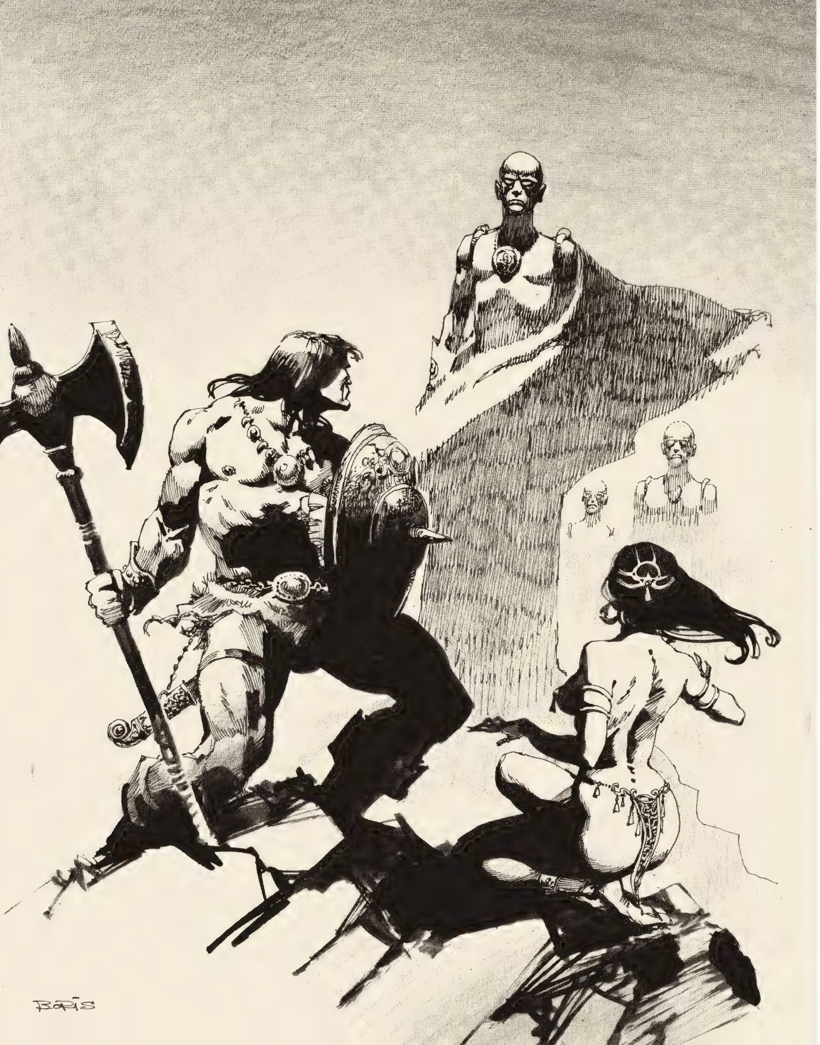
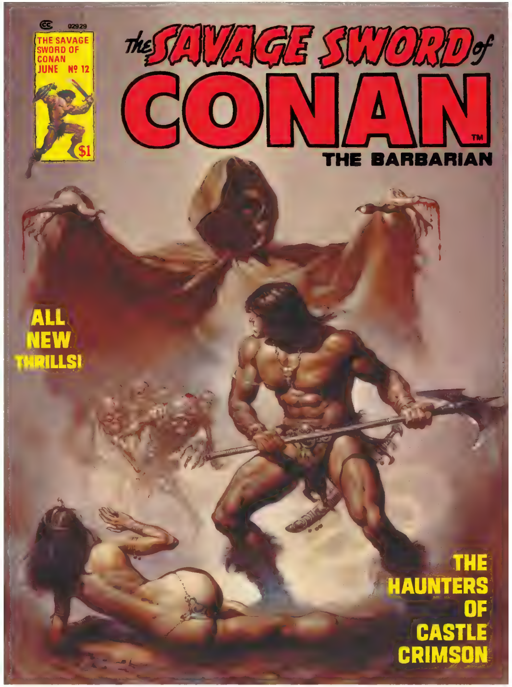
02929
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
FEB. Nº 10
$1
The SAVAGE SWORD of CONAN™ THE BARBARIAN
DEATH-DUEL WITH THE UNDEAD WIZARD
ALL NEW! A SPECIAL EPIC!
THE CATACLYSMIC CONCLUSION OF
CONAN THE CONQUEROR
BORIS
Mr. Retailer for display announcement, see page 73



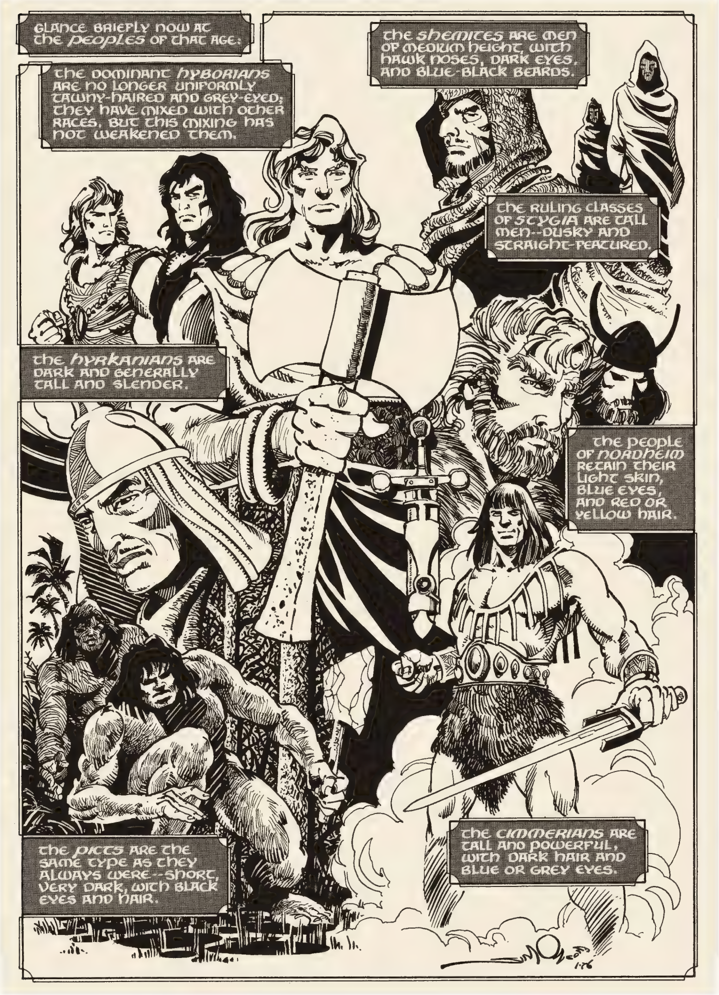
PAGE 46
Savage Sword of Conan No. 9. Cover. Painted art, Boris Vallejo. December 1975.

PAGE 47
Savage Sword of Conan No. 10. Cover. Painted art, Boris Vallejo. February 1976.


02929
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
JUNE Nº 12
$1
The SAVAGE SWORD of
CONAN™
THE BARBARIAN
ALL NEW THRILLS!
THE HAUNTERS OF CASTLE CRIMSON

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 11. Cover sketch. Boris Vallejo. April 1976.

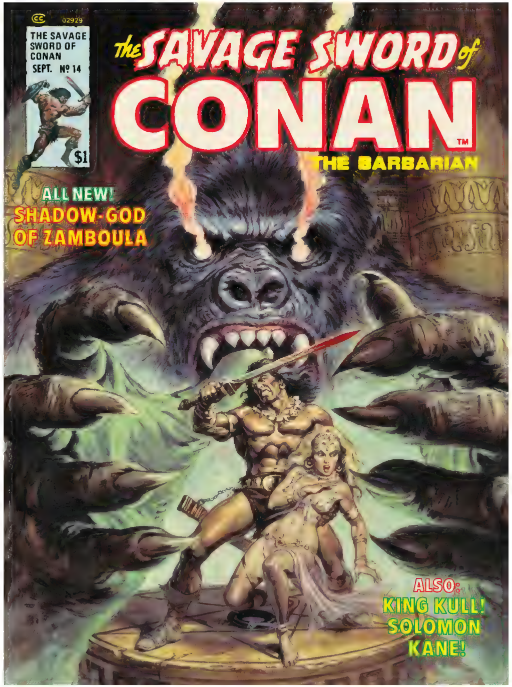
ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 12. Cover. Painted art, Boris Vallejo. June 1976.


GLANCE BRIEFLY NOW AT THE PEOPLES OF THAT AGE.
THE DOMINANT HYBORIANS ARE NO LONGER UNIFORMLY TAWNY-HAIRED AND GREY-EYED; THEY HAVE MIXED WITH OTHER RACES. BUT THIS MIXING HAS NOT WEAKENED THEM.
THE SHEMITES ARE MEN OF MEDIUM HEIGHT, WITH HAWK NOSES, DARK EYES, AND BLUE-BLACK BEARDS.
THE RULING CLASSES OF STYGIA ARE TALL MEN--DUSKY AND STRAIGHT-FEATURED.
THE HYRKANIANS ARE DARK AND GENERALLY TALL AND SLENDER.
THE PEOPLE OF NORDHEIM RETAIN THEIR LIGHT SKIN, BLUE EYES, AND RED OR YELLOW HAIR.
THE PICTS ARE THE SAME TYPE AS THEY ALWAYS WERE--SHORT, VERY DARK, WITH BLACK EYES AND HAIR.
THE CIMMERIANS ARE TALL AND POWERFUL, WITH DARK HAIR AND BLUE OR GREY EYES.

A veteran of Martin Goodman's Magazine Management, Earl Norem painted covers that adorned countless men's magazines and, for Marvel, virtually every title in their stable of black-and-white magazines. He would eventually draw 54 covers for *Savage Sword of Conan*, putting him at the top of the heap in terms of quantity and as a favorite of Conan fans and peers, of *quality* too.

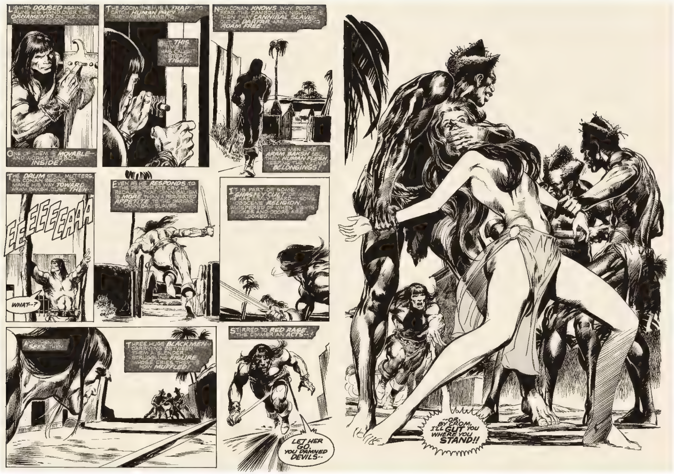
OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 12. Interior art, "The Hyborian Age, Chapter Three: The Hyborian Kingdoms." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils and inks, Walter Simonson. June 1976.

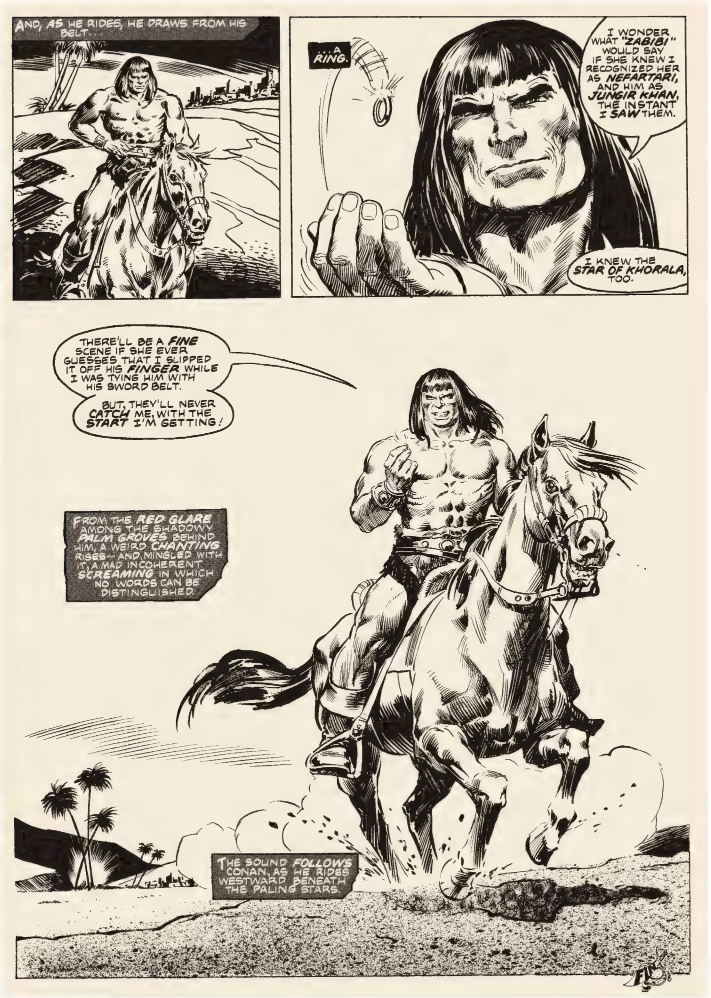
RIGHT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 14. Cover. Painted art, Earl Norem. September 1976.

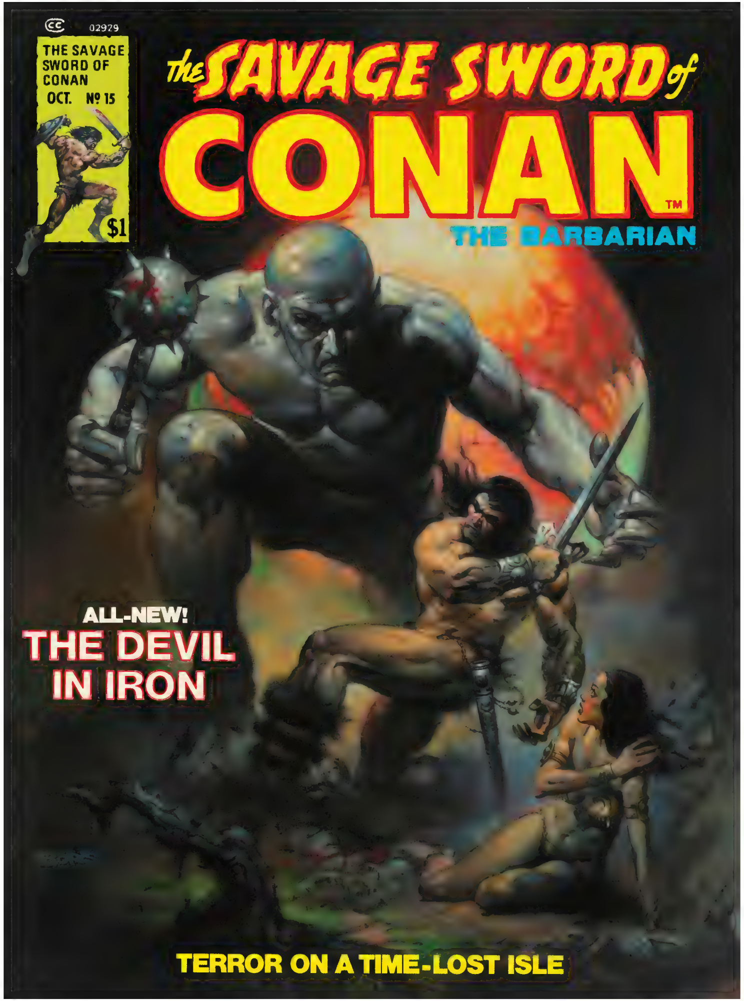

CC
02929
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
SEPT. Nº 14
$1
The SAVAGE SWORD of CONAN
THE BARBARIAN
ALL NEW!
SHADOW-GOD OF ZAMBOULA
ALSO:
KING KULL!
SOLOMON KANE!

Thomas and Adams had worked together on classic runs of *X-Men* and *Avengers* as well as Conan stories in *Savage Sword* and its four-color cousin, but their preparation of "Shadows in Zamboula" took so much effort that a nearly all-reprint issue had to be prepped for unlucky issue No. 13 when it didn't come together in time. The results of their collaboration, which were seen in *Savage Sword* No. 14, were spectacular, with Conan going up against the cannibal denizens of the Hyborian desert.

THIS SPREAD
Savage Sword of Conan No. 14. Interior art, "Shadows in Zamboula." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, Neil Adams; inks, The Tribe. September 1976.


LIGHTS DOUSED AGAIN, HE RUNS HIS HAND OVER THE ORNAMENTS ON THE OUTER SIDE OF THE DOOR.
ONE OF THEM IS MOVABLE— AND WORKS THE BOLT INSIDE!
THE ROOM THEN IS A TRAP TO CATCH HUMAN PREY AS IF THEY WERE RABBITS.
BUT THIS TIME IT HAS CAUGHT INSTEAD A TIGER.
NOW CONAN KNOWS WHY PEOPLE FEAR THE ZAMBOULAN NIGHT. IT IS THEN THAT CANNIBAL SLAVES OUT OF DARFAR ARE ALLOWED TO ROAM FREE.
AND MEN LIKE ARAM BAKSH SELL THEM HUMAN FLESH, KEEPING THE VICTIMS' BELONGINGS!
THE DRUM STILL MUTTERS AS CONAN BEGINS TO MAKE HIS WAY TOWARD ARAM BAKSH. JUST THEN—
EEEEEEAAA
WHAT--?
EVEN AS HE RESPONDS TO THE DESPERATE CRY, HE RECALLS THAT CANNIBALISM IS MORE THAN A PERVERTED APPETITE TO THE DARFAR CANNIBAL SLAVES.
IT IS PART OF SOME GHASTLY CULT OF WHICH HE HAS DIMLY HEARD-- SOME OBSCENE RELIGION WHISPERED OF WHEN LIGHTS FLICKER AND DOORS ARE LOCKED.
AND THEN HE SEES THEM.
THREE HUGE BLACKMEN-- CARRYING BETWEEN THEM A SLENDER, STRUGGLING FIGURE WHOSE CRIES THEY'VE NOW MUFFLED!
STIRRED TO RED RAGE, THE CIMMERIAN ACTS--!
LET HER GO, YOU DAMNED DEVILS--
--OR, BY CROM, I'LL GUT YOU WHERE YOU STAND!!


AND, AS HE RIDES, HE DRAWS FROM HIS BELT...
...A RING.
I WONDER WHAT "ZABIBI" WOULD SAY IF SHE KNEW I RECOGNIZED HER AS NEFARTARI, AND HIM AS JUNGIR KHAN, THE INSTANT I SAW THEM.
I KNEW THE STAR OF KHORALA, TOO.
THERE'LL BE A FINE SCENE IF SHE EVER GUESSES THAT I SLIPPED IT OFF HIS FINGER WHILE I WAS TYING HIM WITH HIS SWORD BELT.
BUT, THEY'LL NEVER CATCH ME, WITH THE START I'M GETTING!
FROM THE RED GLARE AMONG THE SHADOWY PALM GROVES BEHIND HIM, A WEIRD CHANTING RISES-- AND MINGLED WITH IT, A MAD INCOHERENT SCREAMING IN WHICH NO WORDS CAN BE DISTINGUISHED.
THE SOUND FOLLOWS CONAN, AS HE RIDES WESTWARD BENEATH THE PALING STARS.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THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
OCT. Nº 15
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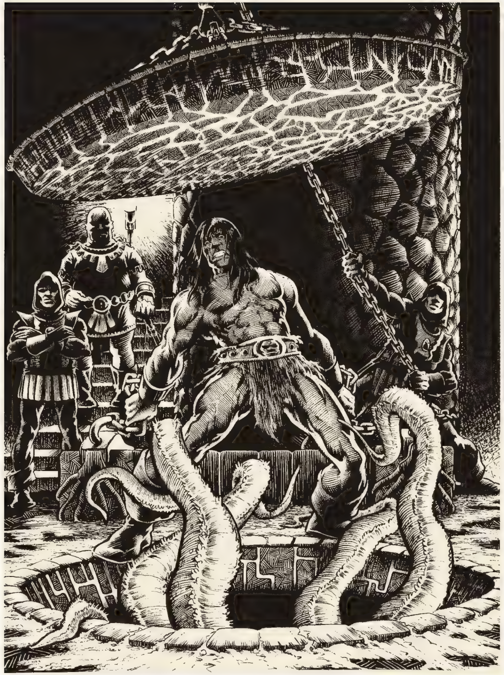
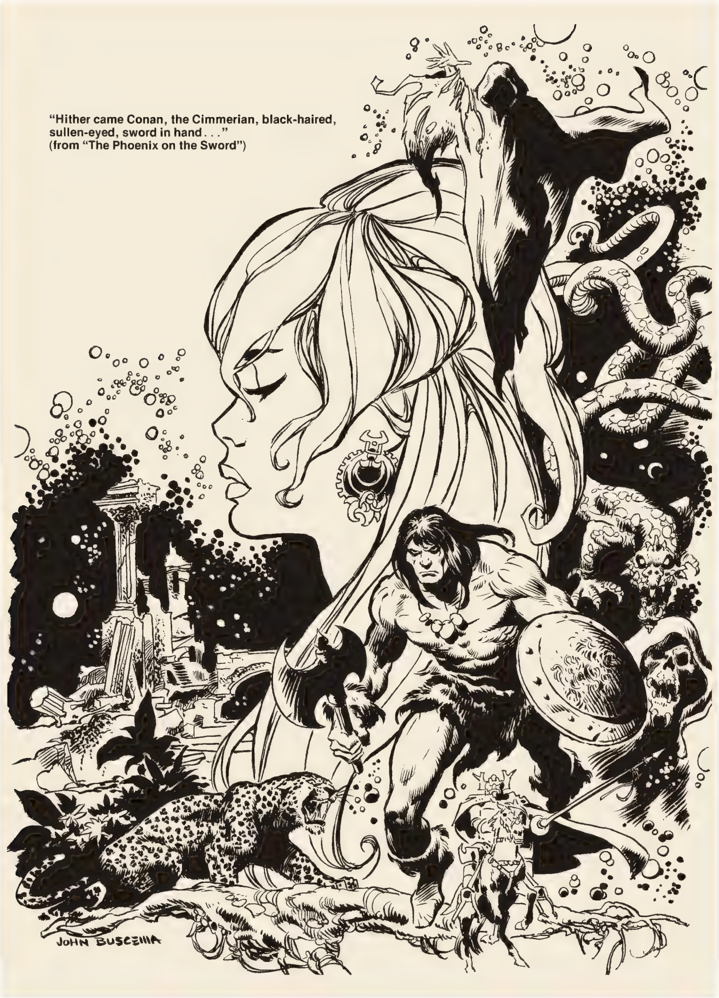
The SAVAGE SWORD of
CONAN™
THE BARBARIAN
ALL-NEW!
THE DEVIL IN IRON
TERROR ON A TIME-LOST ISLE

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 15.
Cover. Boris Vallejo. October 1976.

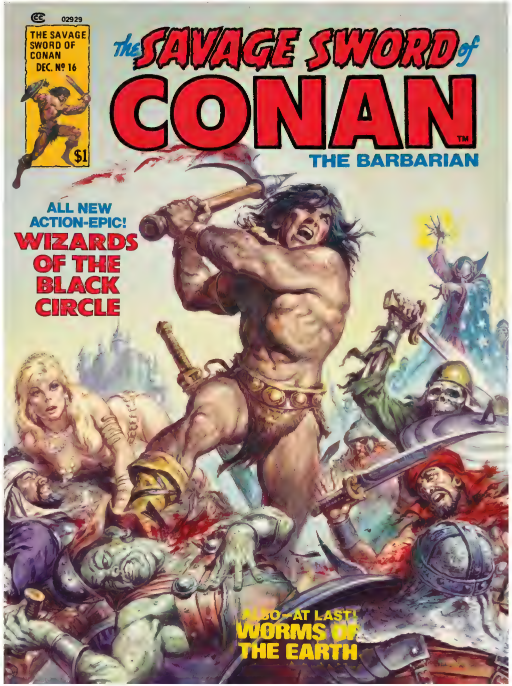
RIGHT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 15.
Pinup. Mike Zeck. October 1976.




"Hither came Conan, the Cimmerian, black-haired, sullen-eyed, sword in hand . . ."
(from "The Phoenix on the Sword")
JOHN BUSCEMA

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 15.
Pinup. John Buscema. October 1976.

RIGHT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 16.
Cover. Earl Norem. December 1976.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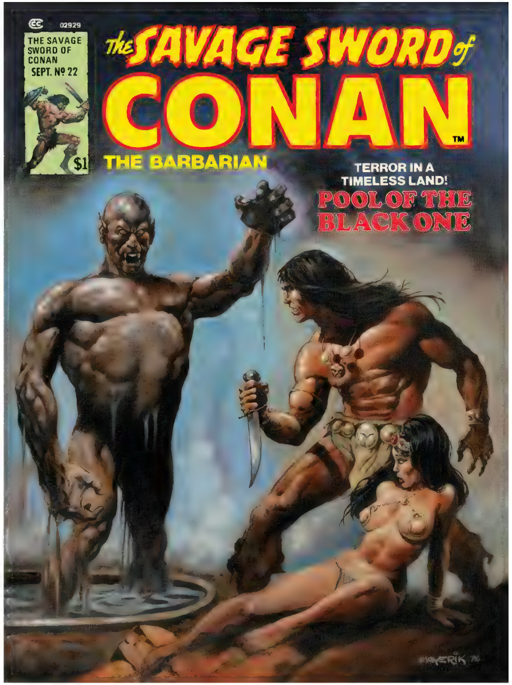
THE BARBARIAN
ALL NEW ACTION-EPIC!
WIZARDS OF THE BLACK CIRCLE
ALSO—AT LAST!
WORMS OF THE EARTH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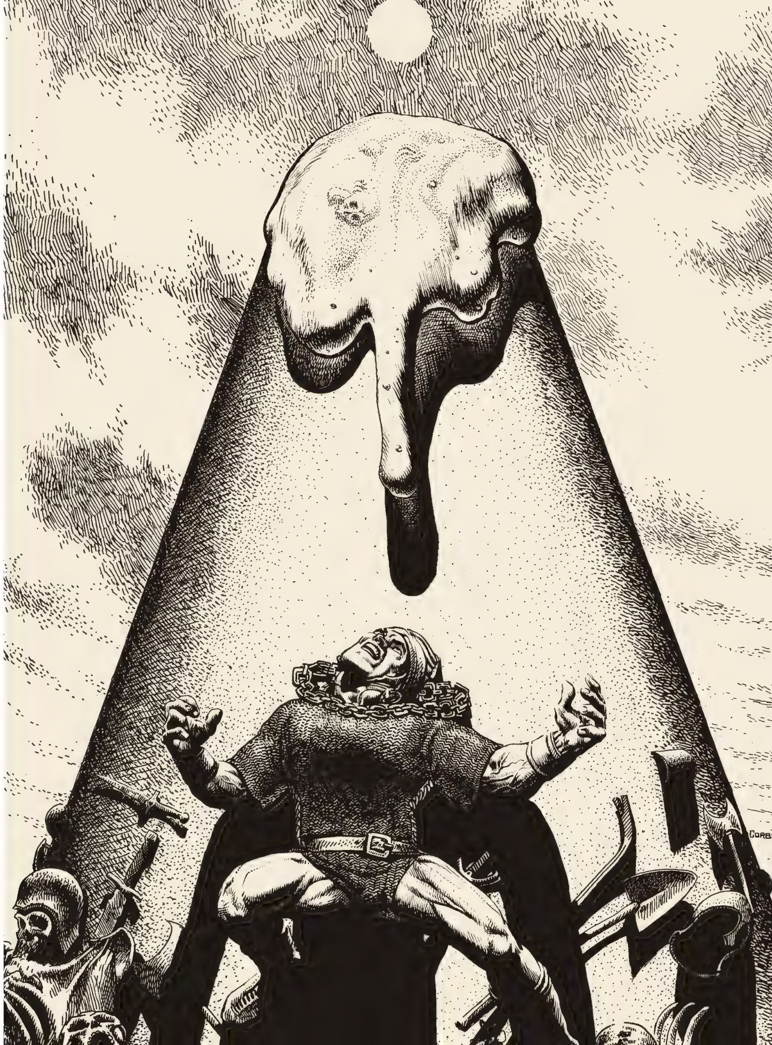
THE BARBARIAN
TERROR IN A TIMELESS LAND!
POOL OF THE BLACK ONE
MAYERIK 76

Underground artist Richard Corben had broken into the comics industry with his unique brand of horror work for Warren Publishing, including the magazines *Creepy*, *Eerie* and *Vampirella*. Though he would illustrate multiple projects for Marvel thirty years later, his work in the 1970s was down to a few inclusions in their line of black-and-white magazines, including an illustration evoking the showdown between Conan and an oozing monster of gelatinous goo inspired by a story by L. Sprague de Camp.

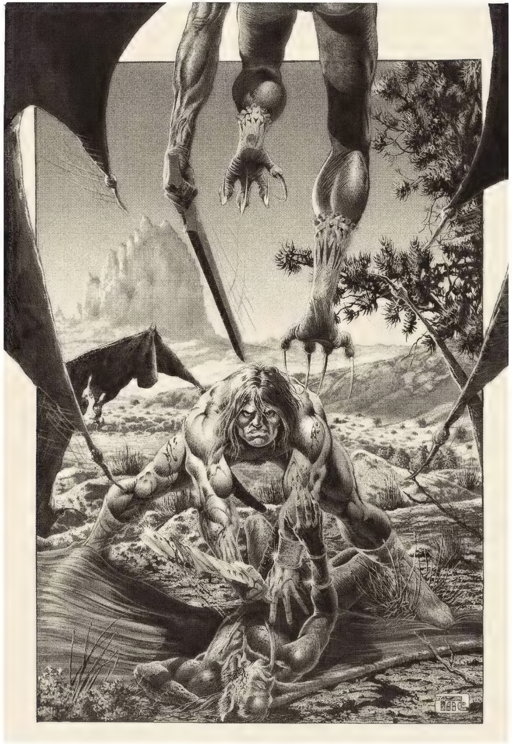
ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 22. Cover. Val Mayerik. September 1977.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 16. Pinup. Richard Corben. December 1976.

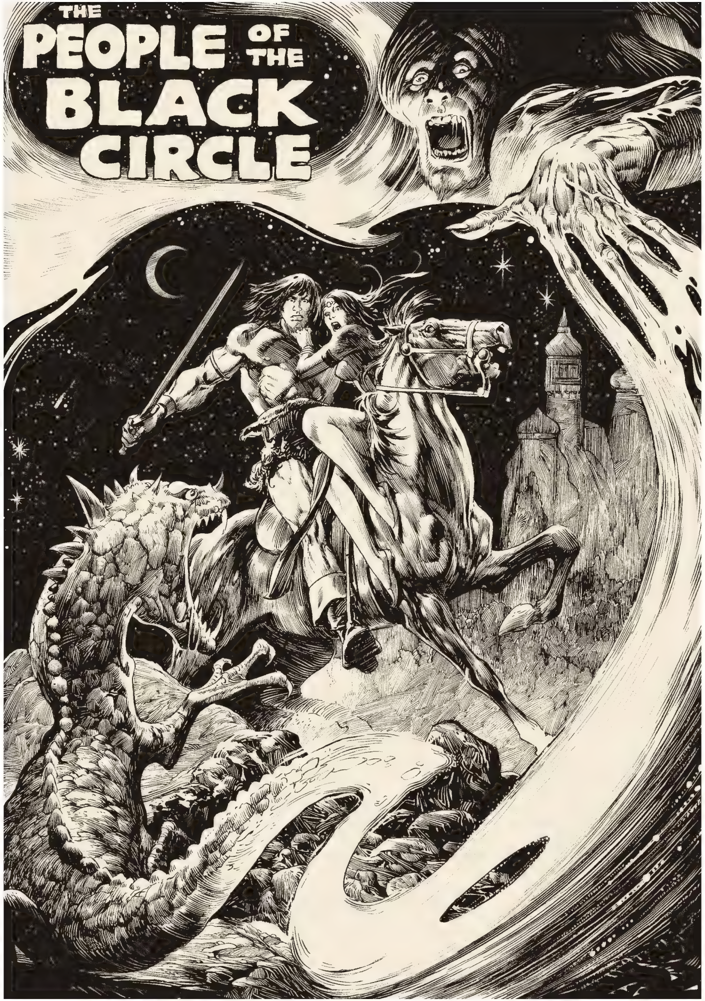


OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 16. Interior art, "The People of the Black Circle." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Alfredo Alcala. December 1976.

Conan stories didn't get more epic than "People of the Black Circle," adapted by Thomas and the fan-favorite team of Buscema and Alcala in a storyline spread over four issues. Set in Vendhya, Howard's Hyborian iteration of India, the heroine, Princess Yasmina, was modeled after Maureen Wise, a cosplayer and belly dancer Thomas had met at a sci-fi fan convention.



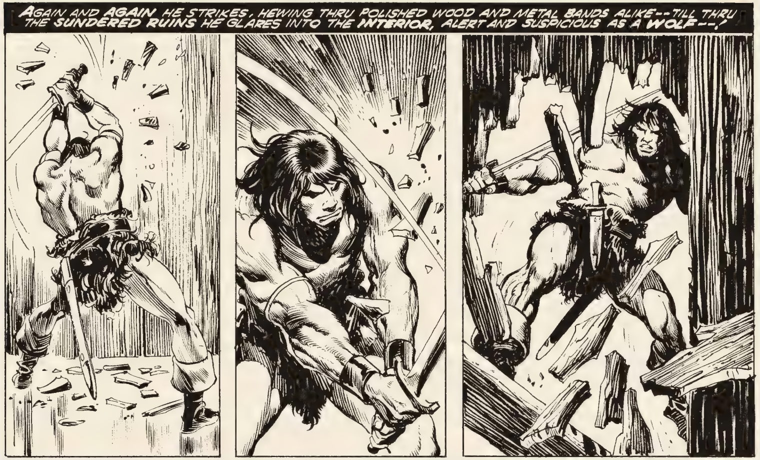
LEFT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 18. Pinup. Tim Conrad. April 1977.

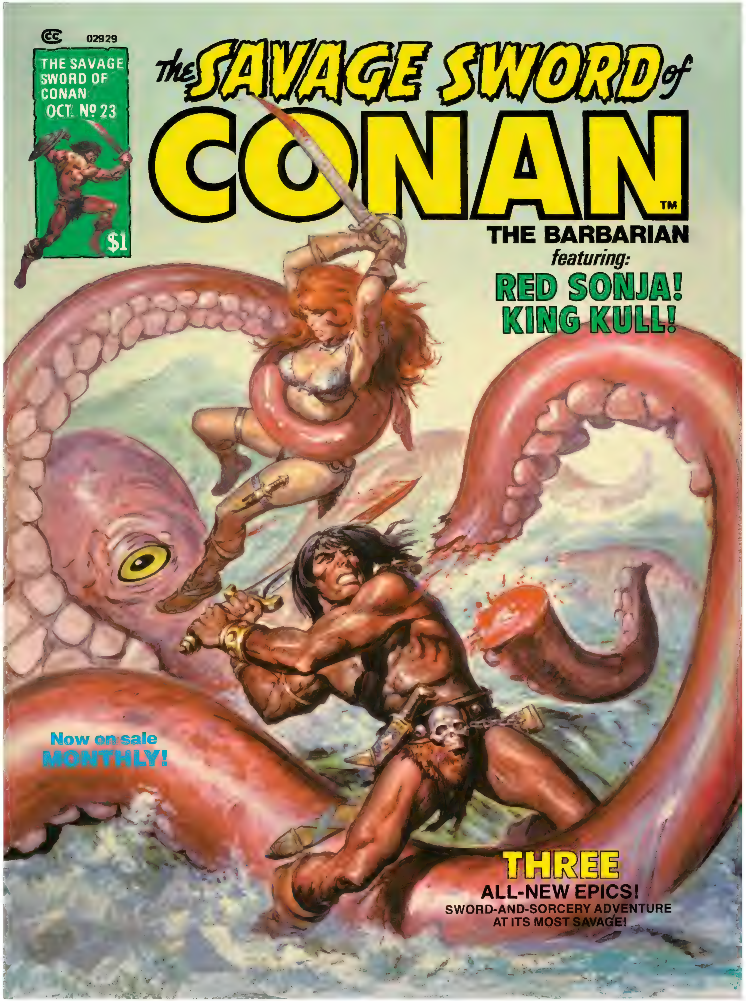

THE PEOPLE OF THE BLACK CIRCLE

BELOW
Savage Sword of Conan No. 19. Interior art, "Vengeance in Vendhya." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Alfredo Alcala. June 1977.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 23. Cover. Earl Norem. October 1977.

Red Sonja joins Conan in slicing through the deadly tentacles of an attacking giant octopus in another classic cover by Earl Norem. The popular Hyrkanian warrior woman was a frequent sight in the pages of *Savage Sword*, whether in pinups, team-ups or her own feature stories.


AGAIN AND AGAIN HE STRIKES, HEWING THRU POLISHED WOOD AND METAL BANDS ALIKE--TILL THRU THE SUNDERED RUINS HE GLARES INTO THE INTERIOR, ALERT AND SUSPICIOUS AS A WOLF--!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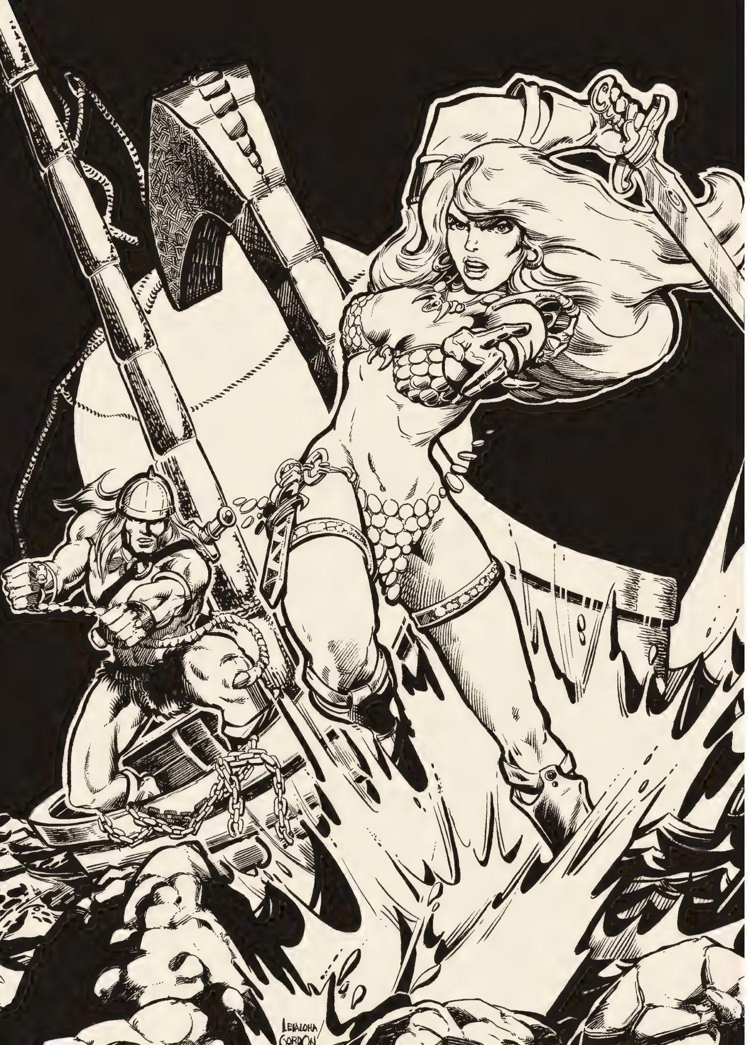
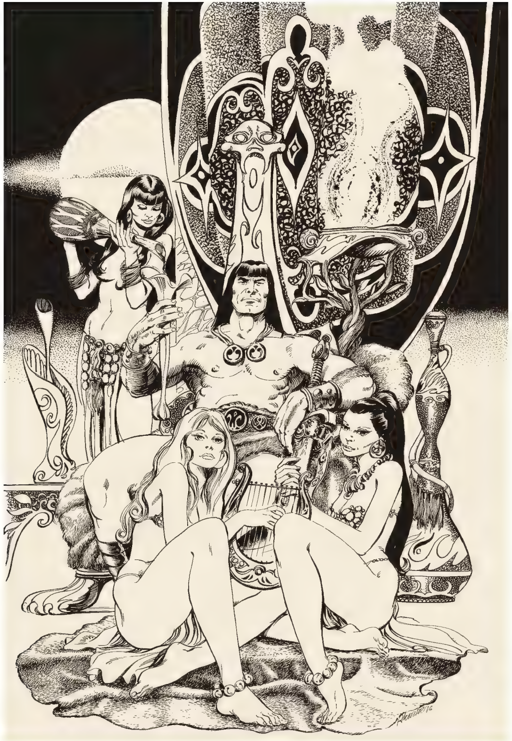
THE BARBARIAN
featuring:
RED SONJA!
KING KULL!
Now on sale
MONTHLY!
THREE
ALL-NEW EPICS!
SWORD-AND-SORCERY ADVENTURE
AT ITS MOST SAVAGE!

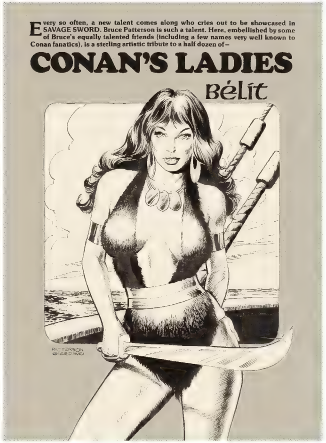


OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 23. Pinup. Pencils, Steve Leialoha; inks, Al Gordon. October 1977.

RIGHT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 24. Pinup. Vicente Alcazar. November 1977.



PAGES 66-67
Savage Sword of Conan No. 29. Pinups. Bruce Patterson. May 1978.

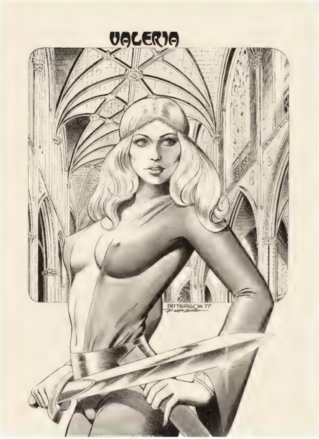


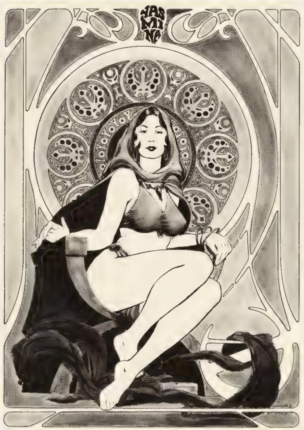
Every so often, a new talent comes along who cries out to be showcased in SAVAGE SWORD. Bruce Patterson is such a talent. Here, embellished by some of Bruce's equally talented friends (including a few names very well known to Conan fanatics), is a sterling artistic tribute to a half dozen of—

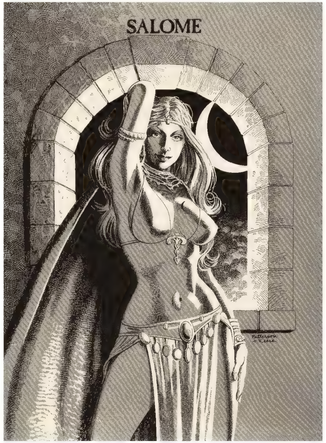
CONAN'S LADIES

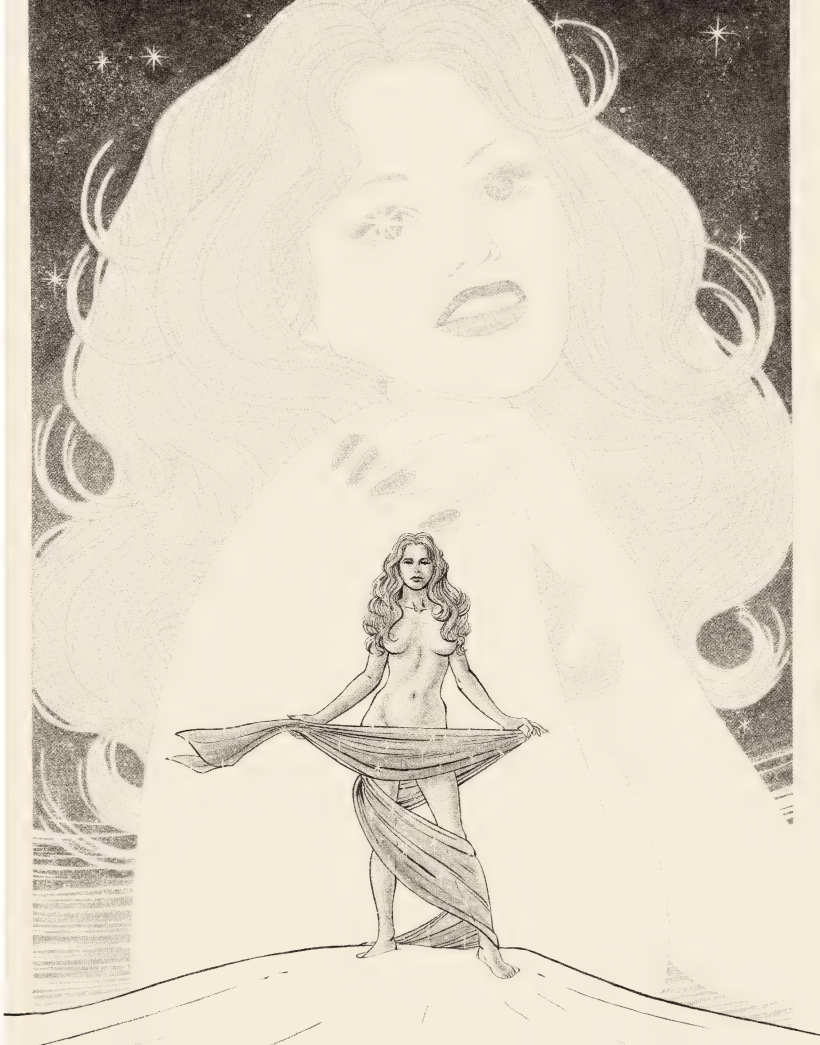
Bélit

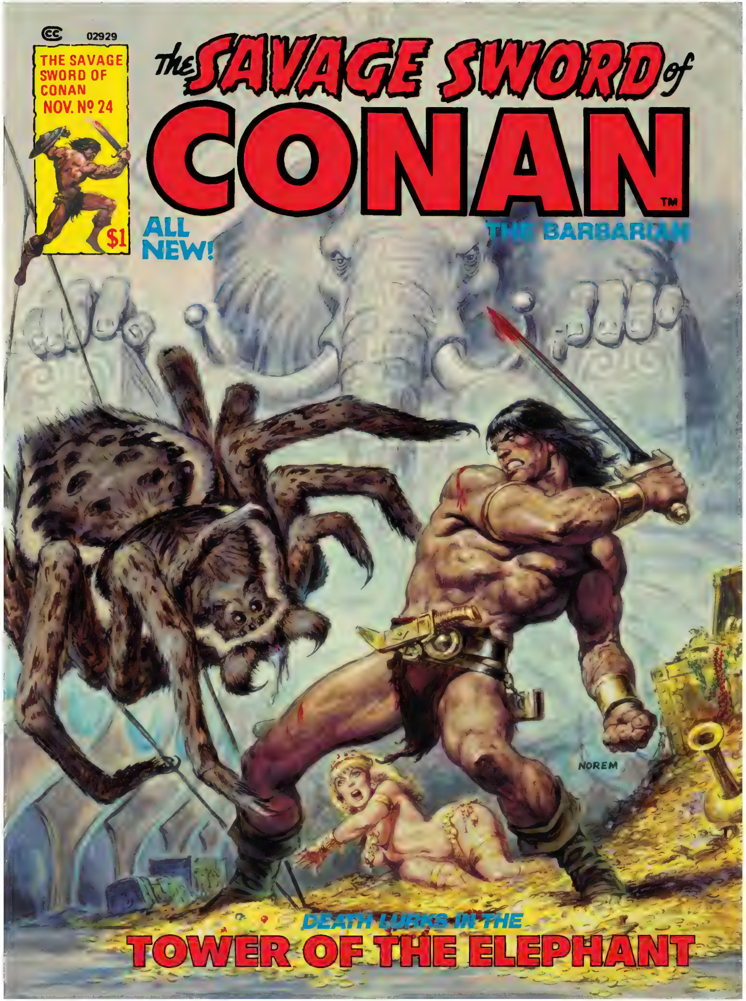
PATTERSON GIORDANO


VALERIA
PATTERSON 77




SALOME
Patterson

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THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN NOV. Nº 24
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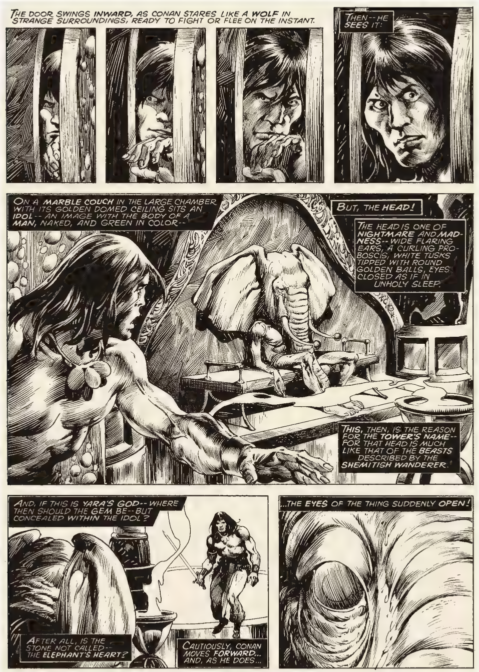
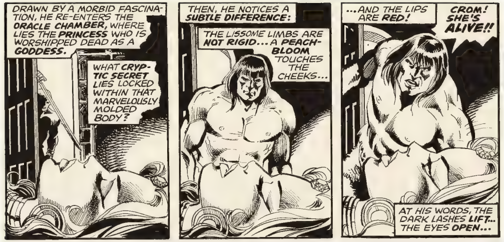
The SAVAGE SWORD of
CONAN™
THE BARBARIAN
ALL NEW!
NOREM
DEATH LURKS IN THE
TOWER OF THE ELEPHANT

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 24.
Cover. Earl Norem. November 1977.


THE DOOR SWINGS INWARD, AS CONAN STARES LIKE A WOLF IN STRANGE SURROUNDINGS, READY TO FIGHT OR FLEE ON THE INSTANT.
THEN--HE SEES IT:
ON A MARBLE COUCH IN THE LARGE CHAMBER WITH ITS GOLDEN DOMED CEILING SITS AN IDOL--AN IMAGE WITH THE BODY OF A MAN, NAKED, AND GREEN IN COLOR--
BUT, THE HEAD!
THE HEAD IS ONE OF NIGHTMARE AND MADNESS--WIDE FLARING EARS, A CURLING PROBOSCIS, WHITE TUSKS TIPPED WITH ROUND GOLDEN BALLS, EYES CLOSED AS IF IN UNHOLY SLEEP.
THIS, THEN, IS THE REASON FOR THE TOWER'S NAME--FOR THAT HEAD IS MUCH LIKE THAT OF THE BEASTS DESCRIBED BY THE SHEMITISH WANDERER.
AND, IF THIS IS YARA'S GOD--WHERE THEN SHOULD THE GEM BE--BUT CONCEALED WITHIN THE IDOL?
AFTER ALL, IS THE STONE NOT CALLED--THE ELEPHANT'S HEART?
CAUTIOUSLY, CONAN MOVES FORWARD... AND, AS HE DOES...
...THE EYES OF THE THING SUDDENLY OPEN!

ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 24. Interior art, "The Tower of the Elephant." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Alfredo Alcala. November 1977.

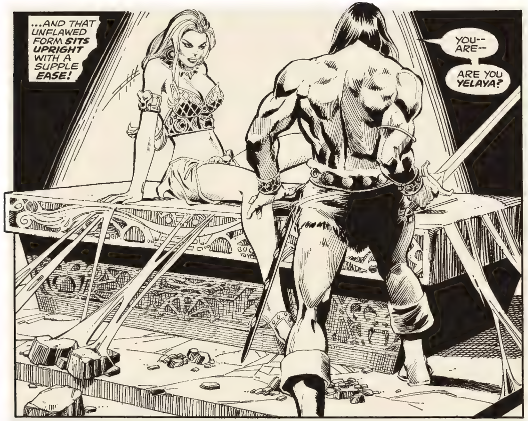
Roy Thomas took another stab at his favorite of all Robert E. Howard tales, "The Tower of the Elephant." First tackled by Barry Windsor-Smith in the psychedelic fourth issue of *Conan the Barbarian*, this time around it would be Buscema and Alcala doing the drawing, not so much to try to improve on the previous take but to give the story more room to breathe in *Savage Sword's* 40-page magazine format.

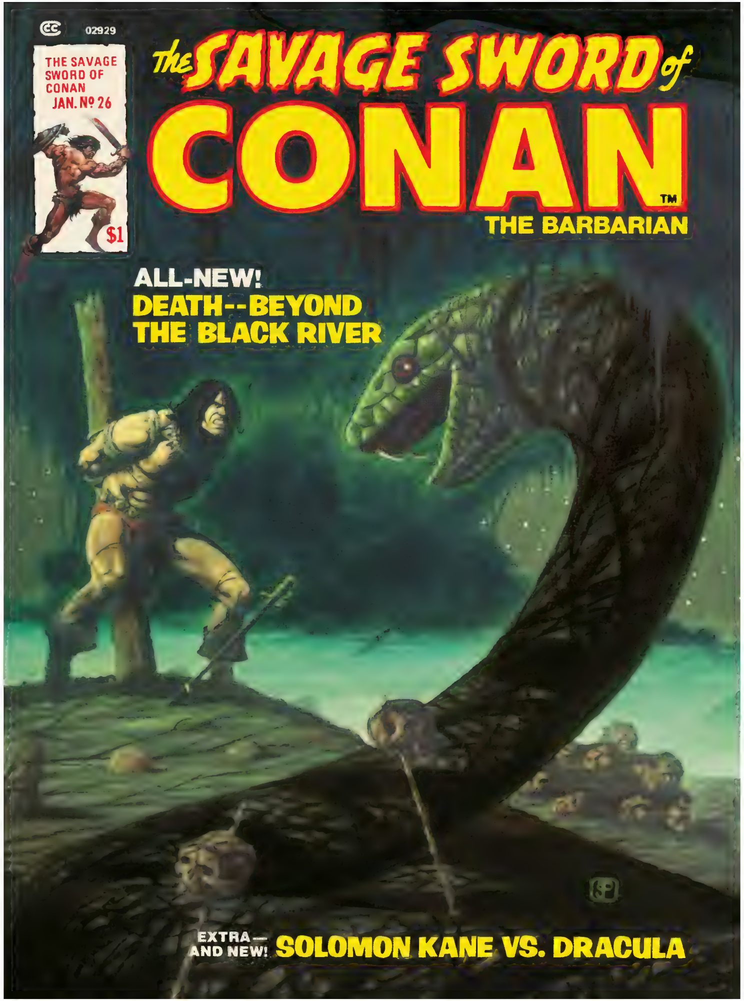

DRAWN BY A MORBID FASCINATION, HE RE-ENTERS THE ORACLE CHAMBER, WHERE LIES THE PRINCESS WHO IS WORSHIPPED DEAD AS A GODDESS.
WHAT CRYPTIC SECRET LIES LOCKED WITHIN THAT MARVELOUSLY MOLDED BODY?
THEN, HE NOTICES A SUBTLE DIFFERENCE:
THE LISSOME LIMBS ARE NOT RIGID... A PEACH-BLOOM TOUCHES THE CHEEKS...
...AND THE LIPS ARE RED!
CROM! SHE'S ALIVE!!
AT HIS WORDS, THE DARK LASHES LIFT... THE EYES OPEN...

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 26.
Cover. Jim Starlin. January 1978.

ABOVE AND RIGHT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 25.
Interior art, "Jewels of Gwahlur."
Script, Roy Thomas; pencils and inks, Dick Giordano. December 1977.

The goddess Yelaya—or is she?—awakens. Neal Adams' Continuity associate and future DC Comics chief Dick Giordano gave John Buscema a one-issue spell on the Howard tale "Jewels of Gwahlur."


...AND THAT UNFLAWED FORM SITS UPRIGHT WITH A SUPPLE EASE!
YOU--ARE--
ARE YOU YELAYA?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THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
JAN. № 26
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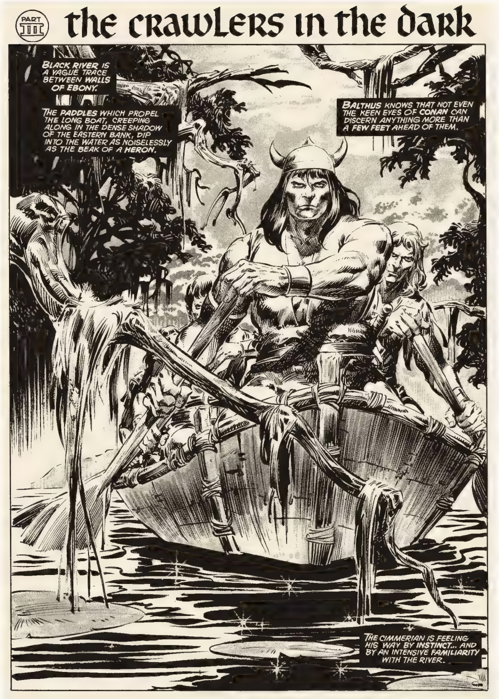
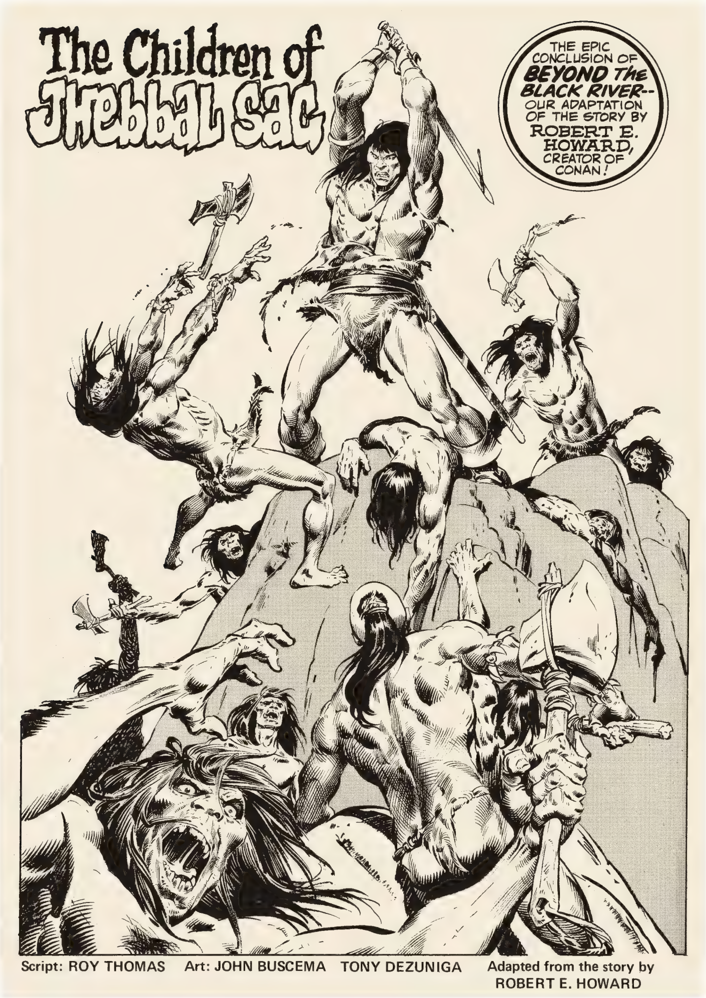
ALL-NEW!
DEATH--BEYOND THE BLACK RIVER
EXTRA— AND NEW! SOLOMON KANE VS. DRACULA

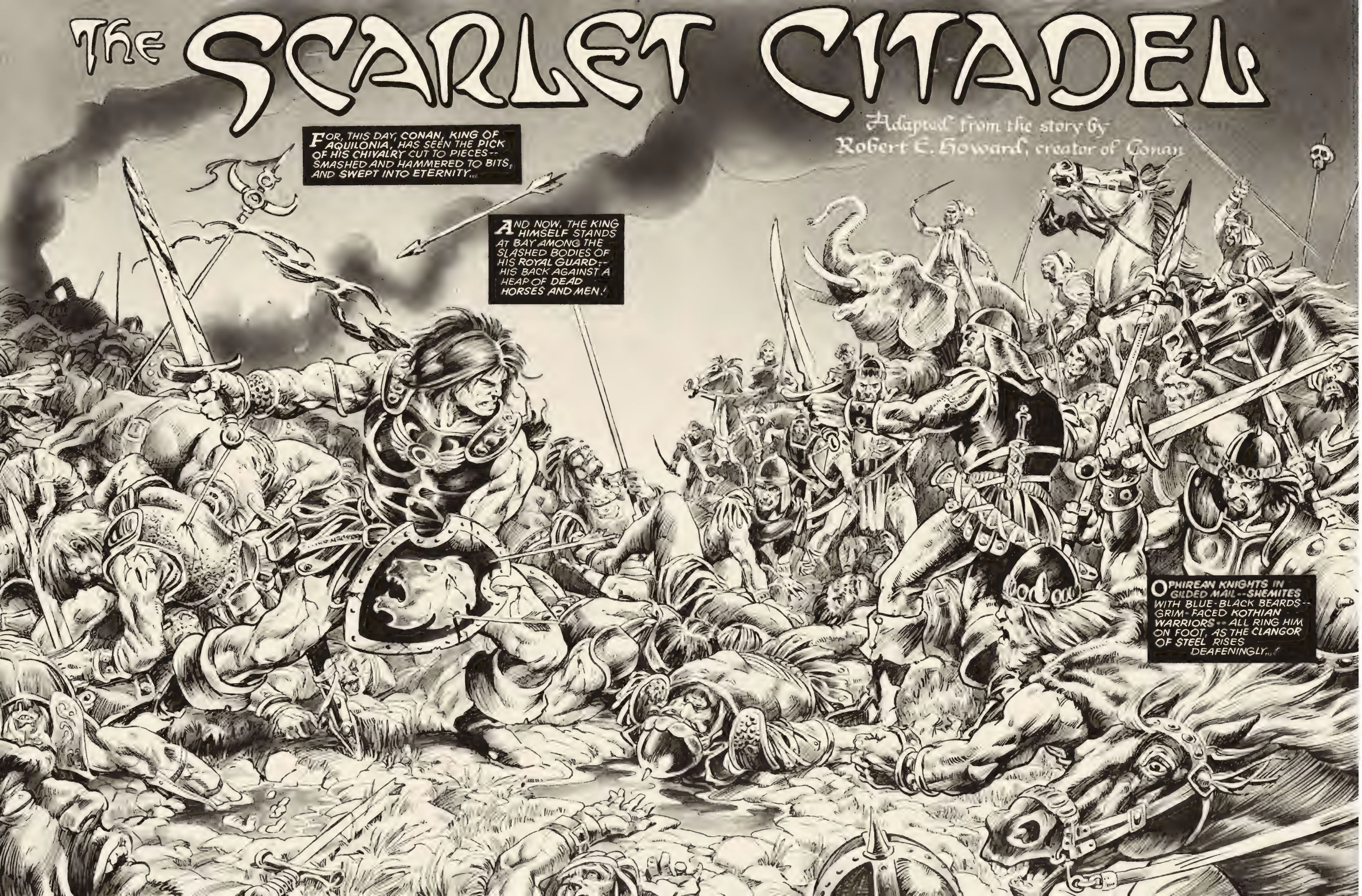

PART III
the crawlers in the dark
BLACK RIVER IS A VAGUE TRACE BETWEEN WALLS OF EBONY.
THE PADDLES WHICH PROPEL THE LONG BOAT, CREEPING ALONG IN THE DENSE SHADOW OF THE EASTERN BANK, DIP INTO THE WATER AS NOISELESSLY AS THE BEAK OF A HERON.
BALTHUS KNOWS THAT NOT EVEN THE KEEN EYES OF CONAN CAN DISCERN ANYTHING MORE THAN A FEW FEET AHEAD OF THEM.
THE CIMMERIAN IS FEELING HIS WAY BY INSTINCT... AND BY AN INTENSIVE FAMILIARITY WITH THE RIVER.

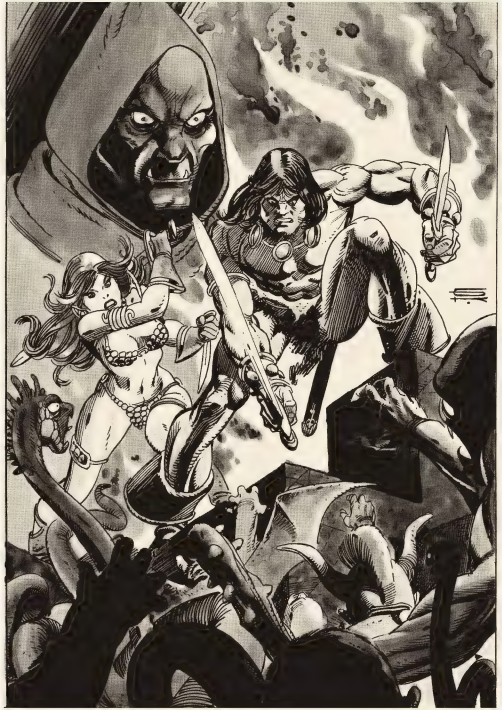
ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 26. Interior art, "Beyond the Black River." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Tony DeZuniga. January 1978.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 27. Interior art, "The Children of Jhebbal Sag." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Tony DeZuniga. March 1978.

PAGES 74-75
Savage Sword of Conan No. 30. Interior art, "The Scarlet Citadel." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, Frank Brunner; inks, Steve Leialoha. June 1978.


The Children of JHEBBAL SAG
THE EPIC CONCLUSION OF BEYOND THE BLACK RIVER-- OUR ADAPTATION OF THE STORY BY ROBERT E. HOWARD, CREATOR OF CONAN!
Script: ROY THOMAS
Art: JOHN BUSCEMA TONY DEZUNIGA
Adapted from the story by ROBERT E. HOWARD

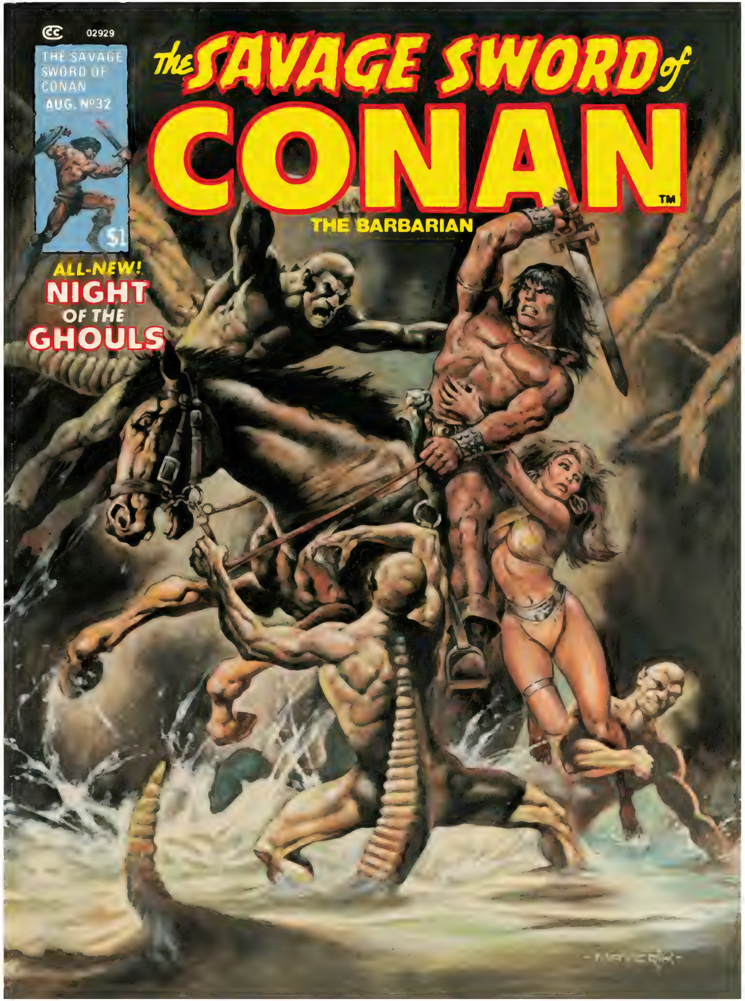

The Scarlet Citadel
Adapted from the story by Robert E. Howard, creator of Conan
For, this day, Conan, King of Aquilonia, has seen the pick of his chivalry cut to pieces--smashed and hammered to bits, and swept into eternity...
And now, the king himself stands at bay among the slashed bodies of his royal guard--his back against a heap of dead horses and men!
Ophirean knights in gilded mail--Shemites with blue-black beards--grim-faced Kothian warriors--all ring him on foot, as the clangor of steel rises deafeningly...!

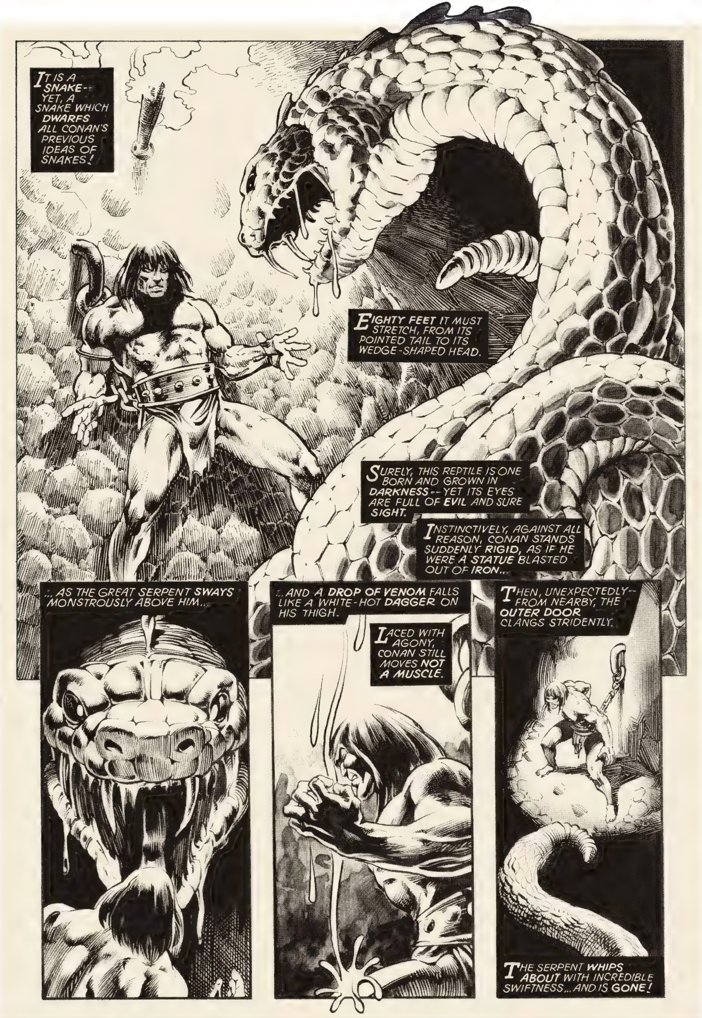


ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 29. Pinup. Gil Kane. May 1978.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 32. Cover. Val Mayerik. August 1978.

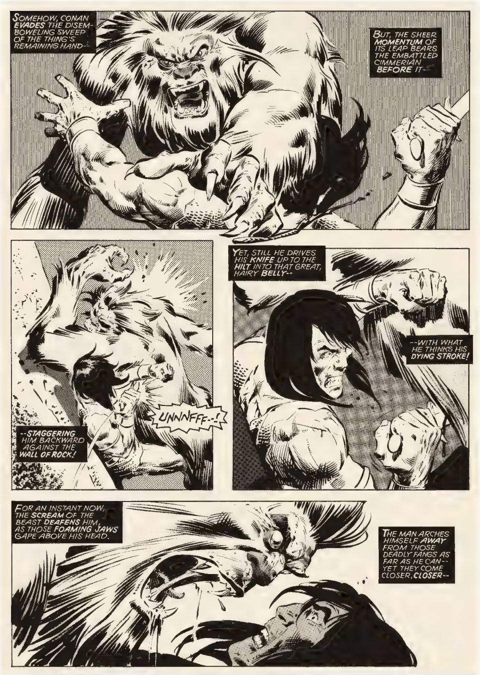
Young artist Val Mayerik, co-creator of Howard the Duck, logged several appearances in the credits of various Conan publications, painting covers and penciling interiors through the late '80s.


CC
02929
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
AUG. Nº32
$1
The SAVAGE SWORD of
CONAN
TM
THE BARBARIAN
ALL-NEW!
NIGHT OF THE GHOULS
MAYERIK


IT IS A SNAKE-- YET, A SNAKE WHICH DWARFS ALL CONAN'S PREVIOUS IDEAS OF SNAKES!
EIGHTY FEET IT MUST STRETCH, FROM ITS POINTED TAIL TO ITS WEDGE-SHAPED HEAD.
SURELY, THIS REPTILE IS ONE BORN AND GROWN IN DARKNESS-- YET ITS EYES ARE FULL OF EVIL AND SURE SIGHT.
INSTINCTIVELY, AGAINST ALL REASON, CONAN STANDS SUDDENLY RIGID, AS IF HE WERE A STATUE BLASTED OUT OF IRON...
...AS THE GREAT SERPENT SWAYS MONSTROUSLY ABOVE HIM...
...AND A DROP OF VENOM FALLS LIKE A WHITE-HOT DAGGER ON HIS THIGH.
LACED WITH AGONY, CONAN STILL MOVES NOT A MUSCLE.
THEN, UNEXPECTEDLY-- FROM NEARBY, THE OUTER DOOR CLANGS STRIDENTLY.
THE SERPENT WHIPS ABOUT WITH INCREDIBLE SWIFTNESS... AND IS GONE!

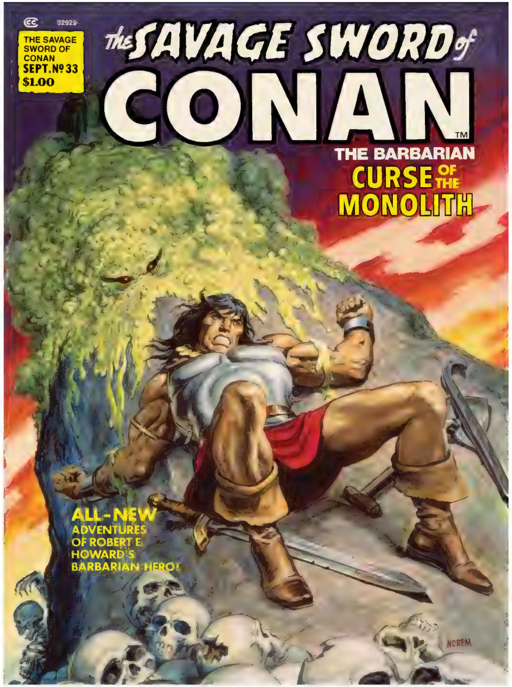
OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 30. Interior art, "The Scarlet Citadel." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, Frank Brunner; inks, Steve Leialoha. June 1978.

Another *Howard the Duck* artist of the '70s, Frank Brunner, penciled his sole story for *Savage Sword* in the magazine's 30th issue, adapting an early Howard effort, "The Scarlet Citadel." Impressed with his work in *Doctor Strange*, Thomas held a short conversation with Brunner and provided him with Robert E. Howard's story, and the artist took it from there, penciling the entire story for Thomas to dialogue—including a mortal staredown between barbarian and giant snake.


SOMEHOW, CONAN EVADES THE DISEMBOWELING SWEEP OF THE THING'S REMAINING HAND--
BUT, THE SHEER MOMENTUM OF ITS LEAP BEARS THE EMBATTLED CIMMERIAN BEFORE IT--
--STAGGERING HIM BACKWARD AGAINST THE WALL OF ROCK!
UNNNFFF--!
YET, STILL HE DRIVES HIS KNIFE UP TO THE HILT INTO THAT GREAT, HAIRY BELLY--
--WITH WHAT HE THINKS HIS DYING STROKE!
FOR AN INSTANT NOW, THE SCREAM OF THE BEAST DEAFENS HIM, AS THOSE FOAMING JAWS GAPE ABOVE HIS HEAD.
THE MAN ARCHES HIMSELF AWAY FROM THOSE DEADLY FANGS AS FAR AS HE CAN-- YET THEY COME CLOSER, CLOSER--

ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 32. Interior art, "The Ghouls of Yanaidar." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Tony DeZuniga. August 1978.

Monsters abounded in Conan's world, and *Savage Sword* artists had fun showing them in fearsome action—like Buscema and DeZuniga's hot-breathed snow-ape.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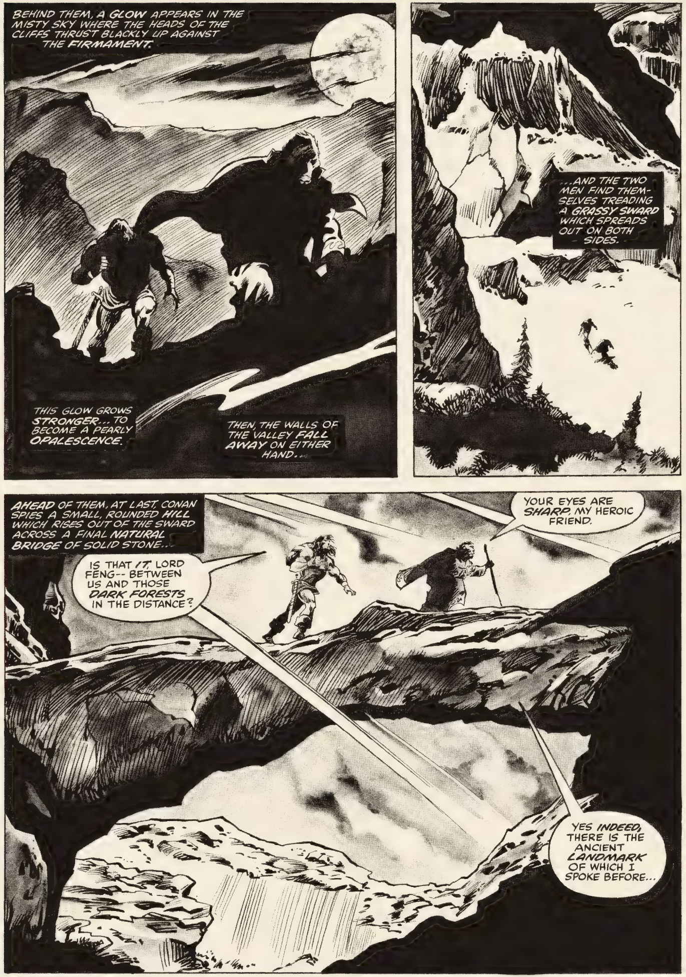
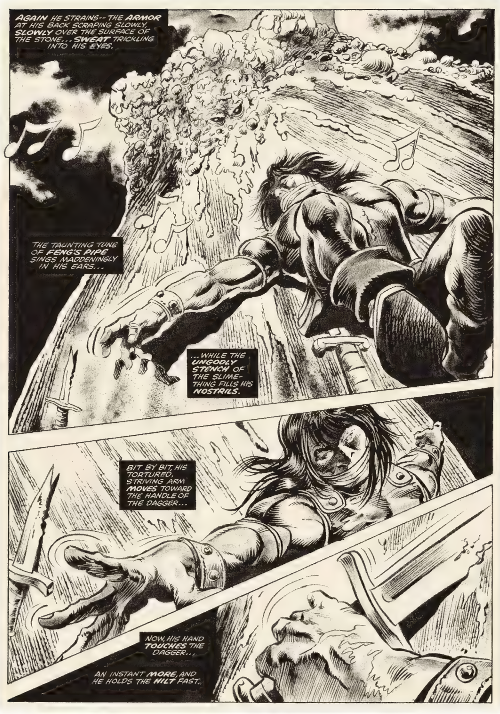
The SAVAGE SWORD of
CONAN
THE BARBARIAN
CURSE OF THE MONOLITH
ALL-NEW ADVENTURES OF ROBERT E. HOWARD'S BARBARIAN HERO!
NOREM

LEFT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 33. Cover. Earl Norem. September 1978.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 33. Interior art, "The Curse of the Monolith." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, Gene Colan; inks, Pablo Marcos. September 1978.

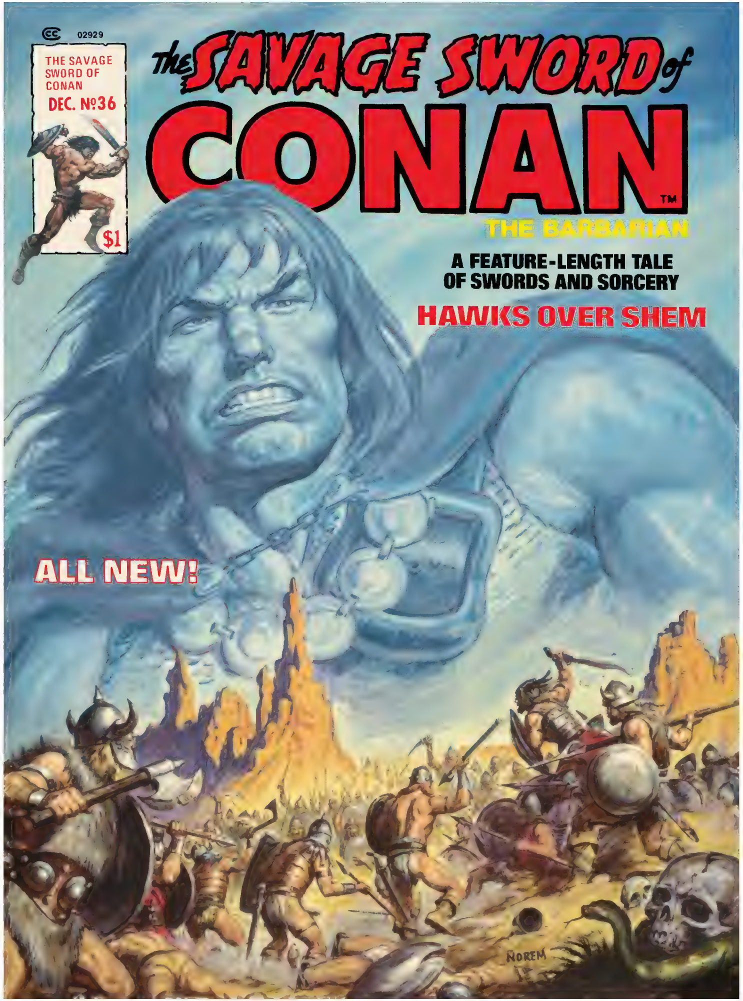
With John Buscema drawing such an incredible volume of Conan—not just in *Savage Sword* but in the various color comics as well, and *on top* of his work outside of Hyboria—Thomas frequently asked other artists to pitch in on tales for use in the black-and-white anthology. Veteran artist Gene Colan brought the moody, gothic sensibilities he'd perfected in *Tomb of Dracula* to his one and only Conan tale, an adaptation of de Camp and Carter's "The Curse of the Monolith," which saw Conan chained to the face of a massive stone block, at the top of which lived a slow, slithering and hungry gelatinous creature. Artist Richard Corben had referenced this iconic scene in a pinup in *Savage Sword* No. 16.


BEHIND THEM, A GLOW APPEARS IN THE MISTY SKY WHERE THE HEADS OF THE CLIFFS THRUST BLACKLY UP AGAINST THE FIRMAMENT.
THIS GLOW GROWS STRONGER... TO BECOME A PEARLY OPALESCENCE.
THEN, THE WALLS OF THE VALLEY FALL AWAY ON EITHER HAND...
...AND THE TWO MEN FIND THEMSELVES TREADING A GRASSY SWARD WHICH SPREADS OUT ON BOTH SIDES.
AHEAD OF THEM, AT LAST, CONAN SPIES A SMALL, ROUNDED HILL WHICH RISES OUT OF THE SWARD ACROSS A FINAL NATURAL BRIDGE OF SOLID STONE...
IS THAT IT, LORD FENG-- BETWEEN US AND THOSE DARK FORESTS IN THE DISTANCE?
YOUR EYES ARE SHARP, MY HEROIC FRIEND.
YES INDEED, THERE IS THE ANCIENT LANDMARK OF WHICH I SPOKE BEFORE...


AGAIN HE STRAINS-- THE ARMOR AT HIS BACK SCRAPING SLOWLY, SLOWLY OVER THE SURFACE OF THE STONE... SWEAT TRICKLING INTO HIS EYES.
THE TAUNTING TUNE OF FENG'S PIPE SINGS MADDENINGLY IN HIS EARS...
...WHILE THE UNGODLY STENCH OF THE SLIME-THING FILLS HIS NOSTRILS.
BIT BY BIT, HIS TORTURED, STRIVING ARM MOVES TOWARD THE HANDLE OF THE DAGGER...
NOW, HIS HAND TOUCHES THE DAGGER...
AN INSTANT MORE, AND HE HOLDS THE HILT FAST.

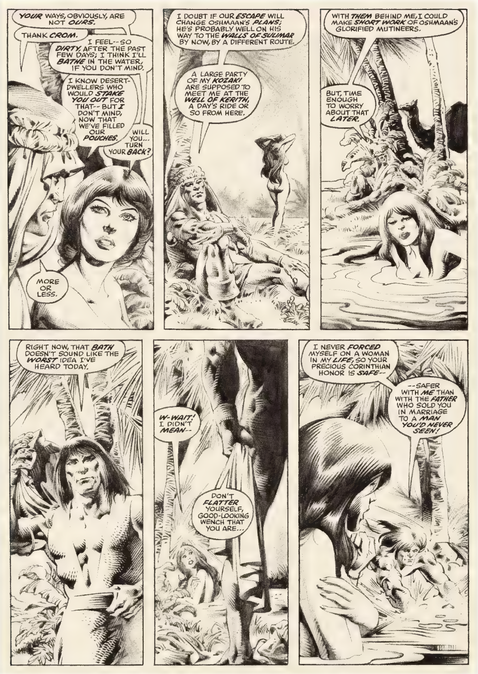
LEFT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 33. Interior art, "The Curse of the Monolith." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, Gene Colan; inks, Pablo Marcos. September 1978.

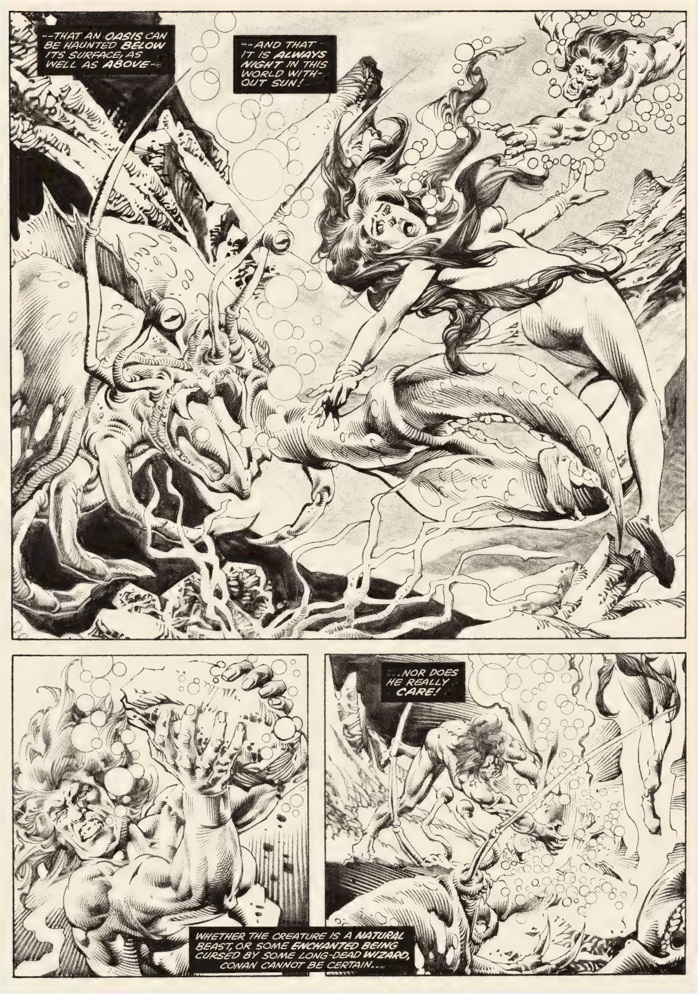
OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 36. Cover. Earl Norem. December 1978.

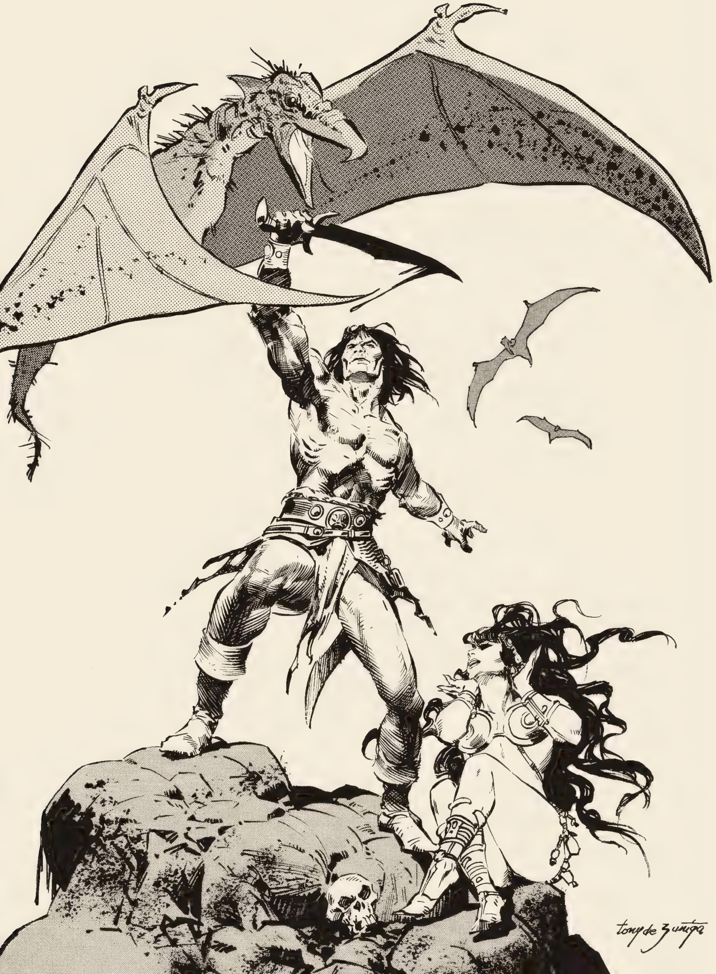

02929
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
DEC. №36
$1
The SAVAGE SWORD of
CONAN
TM
THE BARBARIAN
A FEATURE-LENGTH TALE OF SWORDS AND SORCERY
HAWKS OVER SHEM
ALL NEW!
NOREM

BELOW AND OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 37. Interior art, "Sons of the White Wolf." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, Sal Buscema; inks, Rudy Nebres. February 1979.

Conan and his companion try to relax in the cool waters of a desert oasis pond but soon find they have unwittingly entered the lair of the "white wolf"—in this case a deadly crab monster. Buscema depicts the inevitable confrontation—only this time the Buscema in question is not John but his younger brother, Sal. As prolific as John Buscema was with Conan, Sal's brush with the barbarian was a rare but beautiful sight.

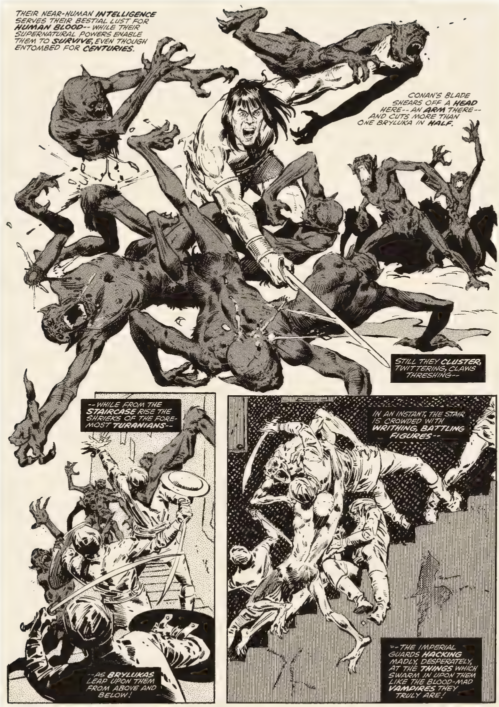

YOUR WAYS, OBVIOUSLY, ARE NOT OURS.
THANK CROM.
I FEEL--SO DIRTY, AFTER THE PAST FEW DAYS; I THINK I'LL BATHE IN THE WATER, IF YOU DON'T MIND.
I KNOW DESERT-DWELLERS WHO WOULD STAKE YOU OUT FOR THAT--BUT I DON'T MIND, NOW THAT WE'VE FILLED OUR POUCHES.
WILL YOU... TURN YOUR BACK?
MORE OR LESS.
I DOUBT IF OUR ESCAPE WILL CHANGE OSHMAAN'S PLANS; HE'S PROBABLY WELL ON HIS WAY TO THE WALLS OF SULIMAR BY NOW, BY A DIFFERENT ROUTE.
A LARGE PARTY OF MY KOZAKI ARE SUPPOSED TO MEET ME AT THE WELL OF KERITH, A DAY'S RIDE OR SO FROM HERE.
WITH THEM BEHIND ME, I COULD MAKE SHORT WORK OF OSHMAAN'S GLORIFIED MUTINEERS.
BUT, TIME ENOUGH TO WORRY ABOUT THAT LATER.
RIGHT NOW, THAT BATH DOESN'T SOUND LIKE THE WORST IDEA I'VE HEARD TODAY.
W-WAIT! I DIDN'T MEAN--
DON'T FLATTER YOURSELF, GOOD-LOOKING WENCH THAT YOU ARE...
I NEVER FORCED MYSELF ON A WOMAN IN MY LIFE, SO YOUR PRECIOUS CORINTHIAN HONOR IS SAFE--
--SAFER WITH ME THAN WITH THE FATHER WHO SOLD YOU IN MARRIAGE TO A MAN YOU'D NEVER SEEN!


--THAT AN OASIS CAN BE HAUNTED BELOW ITS SURFACE, AS WELL AS ABOVE--
--AND THAT IT IS ALWAYS NIGHT IN THIS WORLD WITHOUT SUN!
...NOR DOES HE REALLY CARE!
WHETHER THE CREATURE IS A NATURAL BEAST, OR SOME ENCHANTED BEING CURSED BY SOME LONG-DEAD WIZARD, CONAN CANNOT BE CERTAIN...

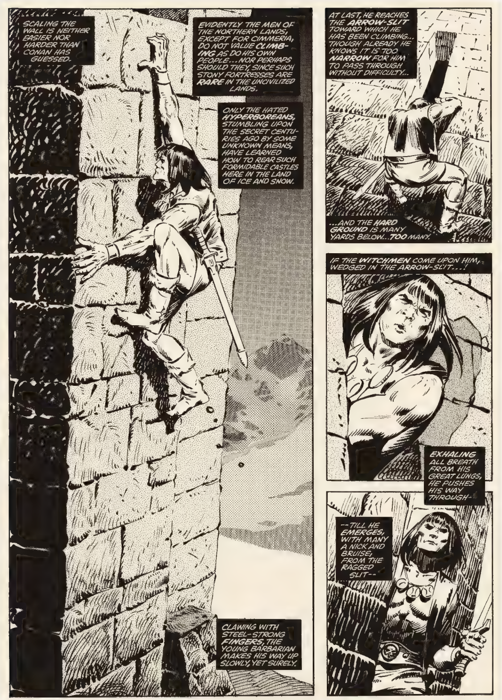

tony de zuniga

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 38. Pinup. Tony DeZuniga. March 1979.

One of the more unsung heroes in the development of Conan's visual lexicon is Tony DeZuniga. The Manila-born artist maintained the studio that produced an enormous amount of new talent that influenced the entire comics scene in the '70s. Primarily an inker, he could pencil with the best of them too, in stories and pinups.


THEIR NEAR-HUMAN INTELLIGENCE SERVES THEIR BESTIAL LUST FOR HUMAN BLOOD-- WHILE THEIR SUPERNATURAL POWERS ENABLE THEM TO SURVIVE, EVEN THOUGH ENTOMBED FOR CENTURIES.
CONAN'S BLADE SHEARS OFF A HEAD HERE-- AN ARM THERE-- AND CUTS MORE THAN ONE BRYLUKA IN HALF.
STILL THEY CLUSTER, TWITTERING, CLAWS THRESHING--
--WHILE FROM THE STAIRCASE RISE THE SHRIEKS OF THE FOREMOST TURANIANS--
--AS BRYLUKAS LEAP UPON THEM FROM ABOVE AND BELOW!
IN AN INSTANT, THE STAIR IS CROWDED WITH WRITHING, BATTLING FIGURES--
--THE IMPERIAL GUARDS HACKING MADLY, DESPERATELY, AT THE THINGS WHICH SWARM IN UPON THEM LIKE THE BLOOD-MAD VAMPIRES THEY TRULY ARE!

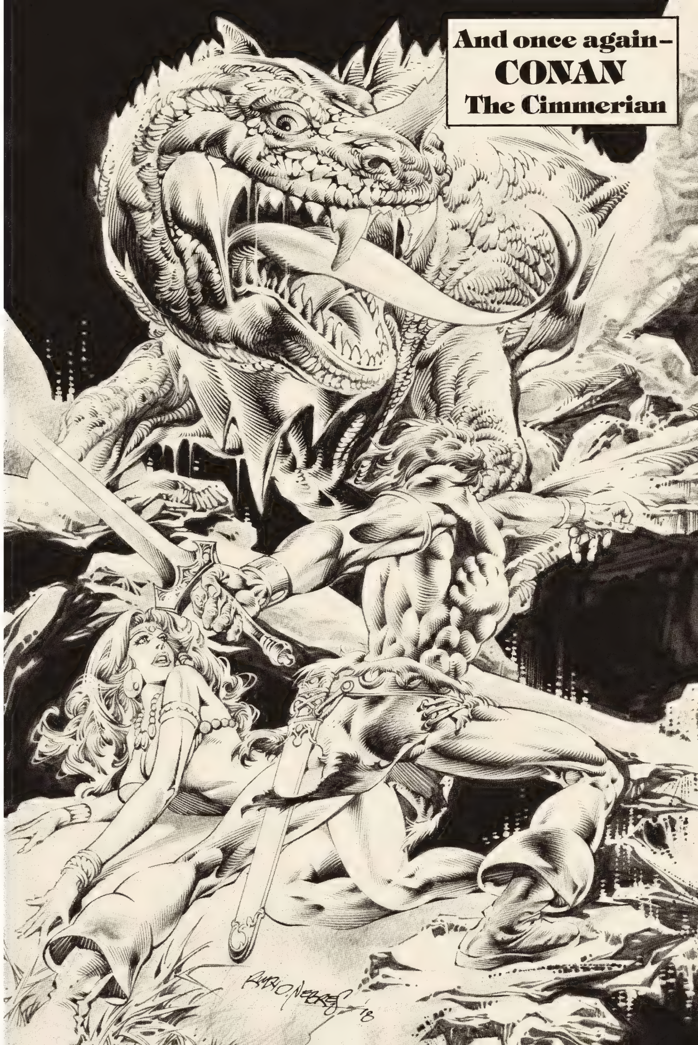
ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 38. Interior art, "The Road of the Eagles." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Tony DeZuniga. March 1979.

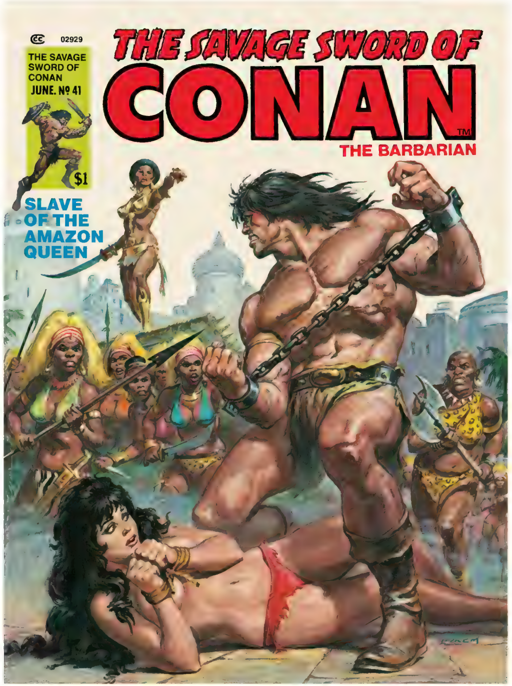

SCALING THE WALL IS NEITHER EASIER NOR HARDER THAN CONAN HAS GUESSED.
EVIDENTLY THE MEN OF THE NORTHERN LANDS, EXCEPT FOR CIMMERIA, DO NOT VALUE CLIMBING AS DO HIS OWN PEOPLE... NOR PERHAPS SHOULD THEY, SINCE SUCH STONY FORTRESSES ARE RARE IN THE UNCIVILIZED LANDS.
ONLY THE HATED HYPERBOREANS, STUMBLING UPON THE SECRET CENTURIES AGO BY SOME UNKNOWN MEANS, HAVE LEARNED HOW TO REAR SUCH FORMIDABLE CASTLES HERE IN THE LAND OF ICE AND SNOW.
CLAWING WITH STEEL-STRONG FINGERS, THE YOUNG BARBARIAN MAKES HIS WAY UP SLOWLY, YET SURELY.
AT LAST, HE REACHES THE ARROW-SLIT TOWARD WHICH HE HAS BEEN CLIMBING... THOUGH ALREADY HE KNOWS IT IS TOO NARROW FOR HIM TO PASS THROUGH WITHOUT DIFFICULTY...
...AND THE HARD GROUND IS MANY YARDS BELOW...TOO MANY.
IF THE WITCHMEN COME UPON HIM, WEDGED IN THE ARROW-SLIT...!
EXHALING ALL BREATH FROM HIS GREAT LUNGS, HE PUSHES HIS WAY THROUGH--
--TILL HE EMERGES, WITH MANY A NICK AND BRUISE, FROM THE RAGGED SLIT--

LEFT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 39. Interior art, "The Legions of the Dead." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, Sal Buscema; inks, Tony DeZuniga. April 1979.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 39. Pinup. Rudy Nebres. April 1979.

Another recruit from DeZuniga's studio, Rudy Nebres, was a common sight in the art credits of Marvel's black-and-white magazines. His first American work was in DC's line of horror anthologies, and his bold, ornate style lent itself beautifully to his Conan pinup work.

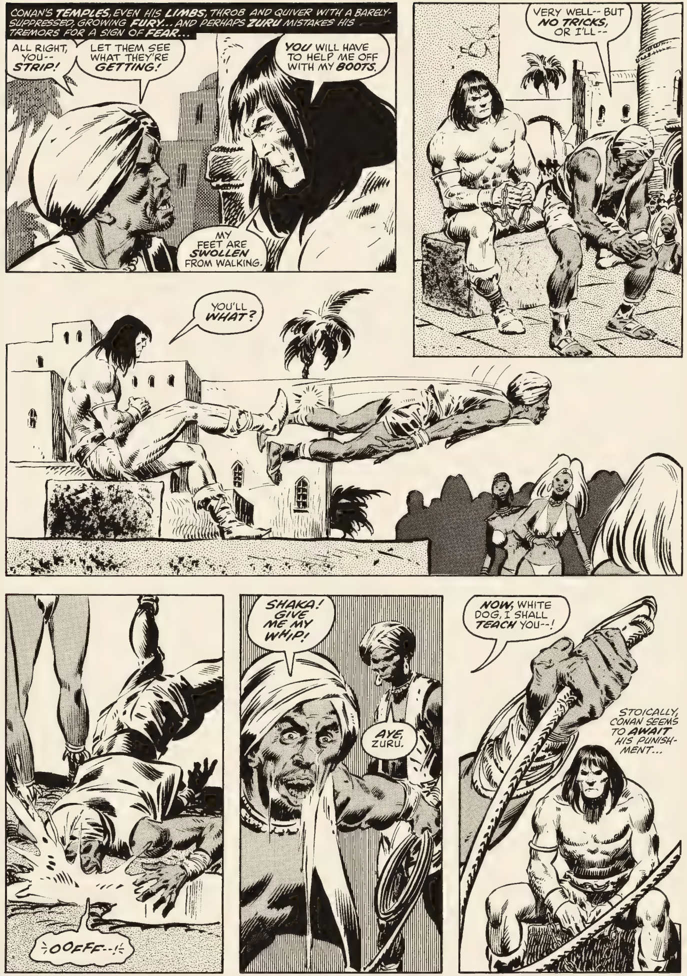

And once again–
CONAN
The Cimmerian

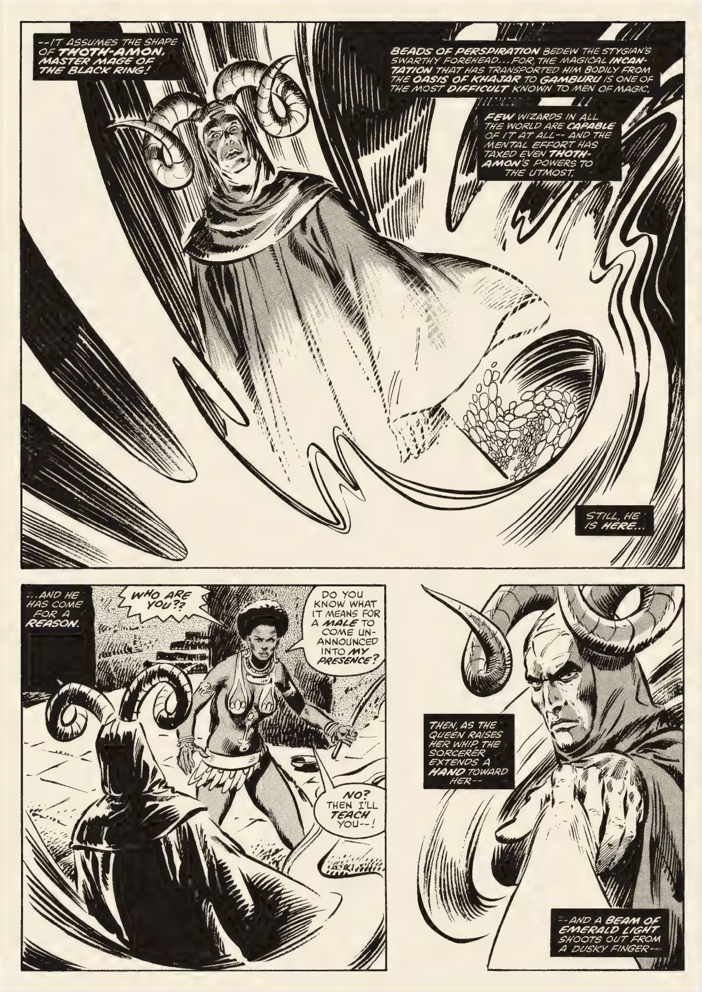

02929
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
JUNE. Nº 41
$1
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF
CONAN
THE BARBARIAN
SLAVE OF THE AMAZON QUEEN

LEFT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 41. Cover. Earl Norem. June 1979.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 41. Interior art, "The Quest for the Cobra Crown." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Tony DeZuniga. June 1979.

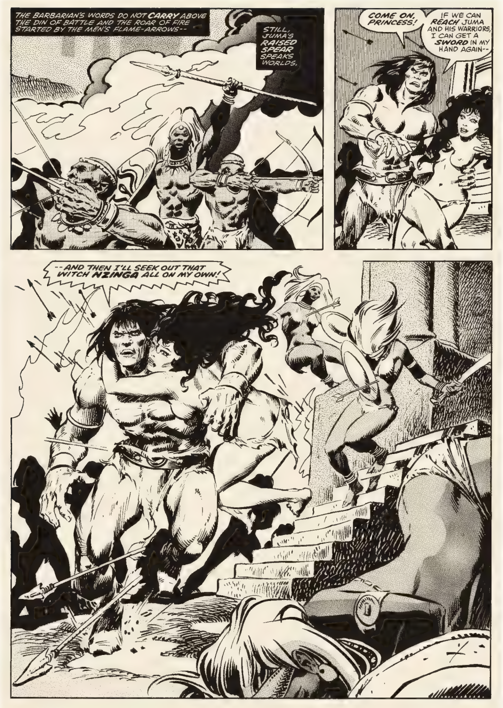
As the decade wore on, DeZuniga's inks graced regular *Savage Sword* artist Buscema's pencils more and more. Despite fan acclaim surrounding Alcala's inks, Buscema's volatile opinion on the matter persuaded Thomas to match the artist with a different inker. DeZuniga brought a supple approach to Buscema's Conan.

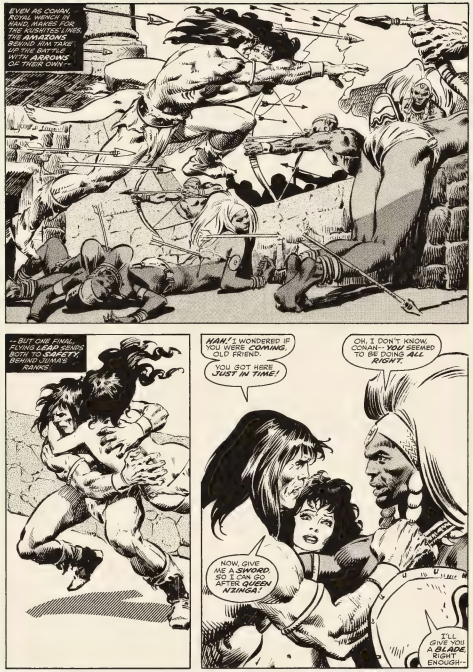

CONAN'S TEMPLES, EVEN HIS LIMBS, THROB AND QUIVER WITH A BARELY-SUPPRESSED, GROWING FURY... AND PERHAPS ZURU MISTAKES HIS TREMORS FOR A SIGN OF FEAR...
ALL RIGHT, YOU-- STRIP!
LET THEM SEE WHAT THEY'RE GETTING!
YOU WILL HAVE TO HELP ME OFF WITH MY BOOTS.
MY FEET ARE SWOLLEN FROM WALKING.
VERY WELL-- BUT NO TRICKS, OR I'LL--
YOU'LL WHAT?
OOFFF--!
SHAKA! GIVE ME MY WHIP!
AYE, ZURU.
NOW, WHITE DOG, I SHALL TEACH YOU--!
STOICALLY, CONAN SEEMS TO AWAIT HIS PUNISHMENT...


--IT ASSUMES THE SHAPE OF **THOTH-AMON, MASTER MAGE OF THE BLACK RING!**
BEADS OF PERSPIRATION BEDEW THE STYGIAN'S SWARTHY FOREHEAD... FOR, THE MAGICAL **INCANTATION** THAT HAS TRANSPORTED HIM BODILY FROM THE **OASIS OF KHAJAR** TO **GAMBURU** IS ONE OF THE MOST **DIFFICULT** KNOWN TO MEN OF MAGIC.
FEW WIZARDS IN ALL THE WORLD ARE **CAPABLE** OF IT AT ALL-- AND THE MENTAL EFFORT HAS TAXED EVEN **THOTH-AMON**'S POWERS TO THE UTMOST.
STILL, HE IS **HERE**...
...AND HE HAS COME FOR A **REASON.**
WHO ARE YOU??
DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT MEANS FOR A **MALE** TO COME UNANNOUNCED INTO **MY PRESENCE?**
NO? THEN I'LL **TEACH** YOU--!
THEN, AS THE QUEEN RAISES HER WHIP THE SORCERER EXTENDS A **HAND** TOWARD HER--
--AND A **BEAM OF EMERALD LIGHT** SHOOTS OUT FROM A DUSKY FINGER--

OPPOSITE AND BELOW
Savage Sword of Conan No. 42. Interior art, "The Devil-Tree of Gamburu." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Tony DeZuniga. July 1979.

The wicked magician Thoth-Amon makes his first appearance in *Savage Sword of Conan* as part of Thomas and Buscema's adaptation of the novel *Conan the Buccaneer*, written by de Camp and Carter. Catching Conan in his pirate captain phase, leading a ship of buccaneers from Zingara, the tale was spread out over several issues and reunited Conan with his Kushite friend, the barbarian Juma.

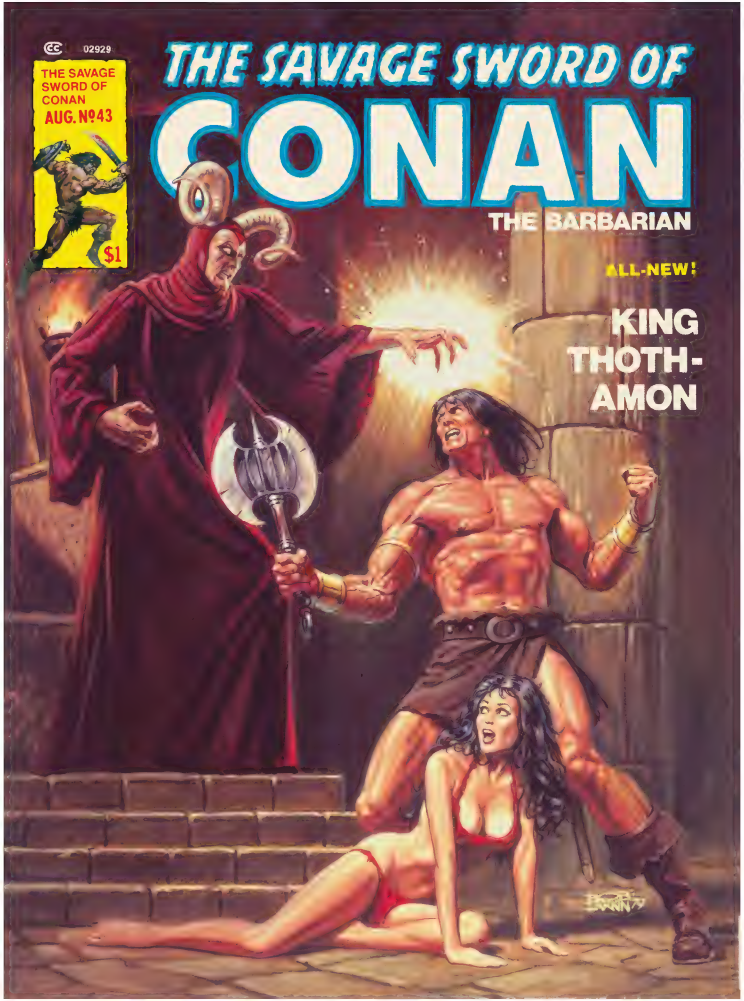

THE BARBARIAN'S WORDS DO NOT **CARRY** ABOVE THE DIN OF BATTLE AND THE ROAR OF FIRE STARTED BY THE MEN'S FLAME-ARROWS--
STILL, JUMA'S **RAISED SPEAR** SPEAKS WORLDS.
COME ON, PRINCESS!
IF WE CAN **REACH** JUMA AND HIS WARRIORS, I CAN GET A **SWORD** IN MY HAND AGAIN--
--**AND THEN I'LL SEEK OUT THAT WITCH NZINGA ALL ON MY OWN!**

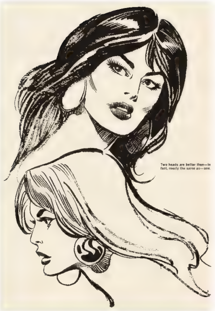

EVEN AS CONAN, ROYAL WENCH IN HAND, MAKES FOR THE KUSHITES' LINES, THE AMAZONS BEHIND HIM TAKE UP THE BATTLE WITH ARROWS OF THEIR OWN--
--BUT ONE FINAL, FLYING LEAP SENDS BOTH TO SAFETY, BEHIND JUMA'S RANKS
HAH! I WONDERED IF YOU WERE COMING, OLD FRIEND.
YOU GOT HERE JUST IN TIME!
OH, I DON'T KNOW, CONAN-- YOU SEEMED TO BE DOING ALL RIGHT.
NOW, GIVE ME A SWORD, SO I CAN GO AFTER QUEEN NZINGA!
I'LL GIVE YOU A BLADE, RIGHT ENOUGH--

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 43. Cover. Bob Larkin. August 1979.

Bob Larkin would lend his talents to fourteen *Savage Sword* covers, making him the third most prolific of the series' cover artists. The versatile artist's work had become familiar in the 1970s, adorning everything from Marvel's humor magazines to their Fireside reprint collections of classic material to Bantam Books' Doc Savage pulp novels.

ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 42. Interior art, "The Devil-Tree of Gamburu." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Tony DeZuniga. July 1979.

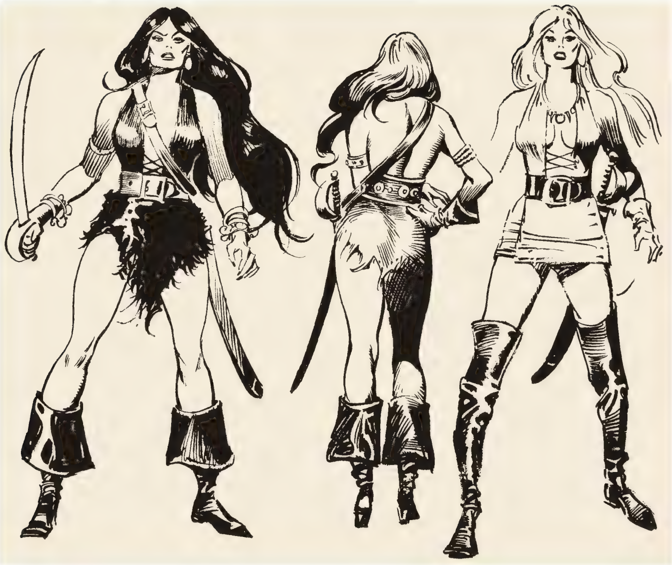

CC
02929
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
AUG. №43
$1
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF
CONAN
THE BARBARIAN
ALL-NEW!
KING THOTH-AMON
LARKIN 79

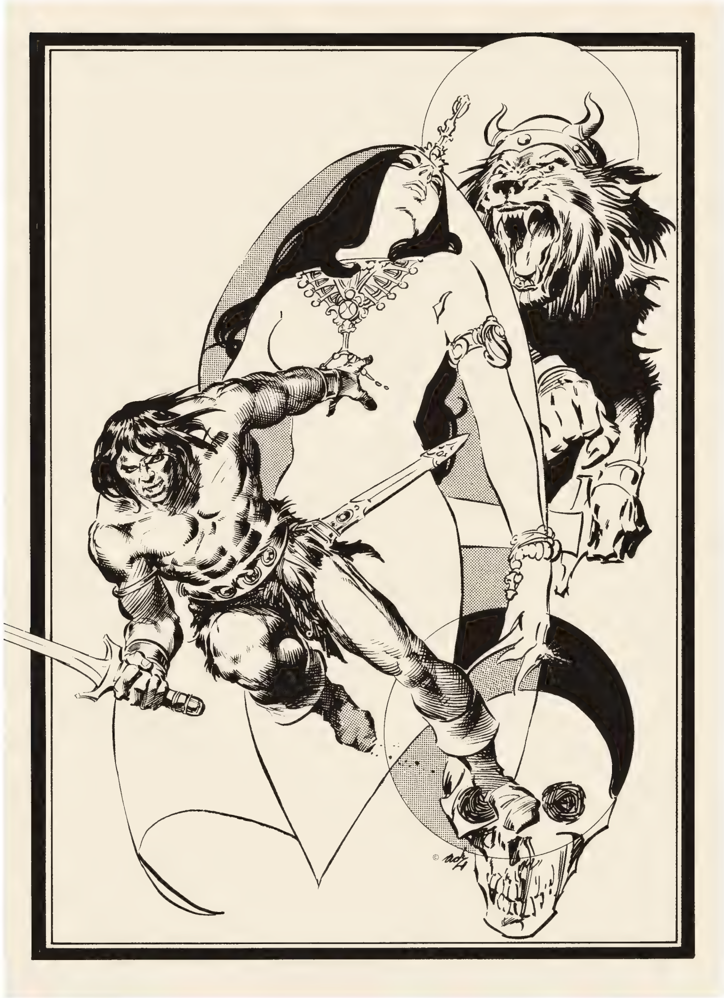

Two heads are better than—in fact, nearly the same as—one.

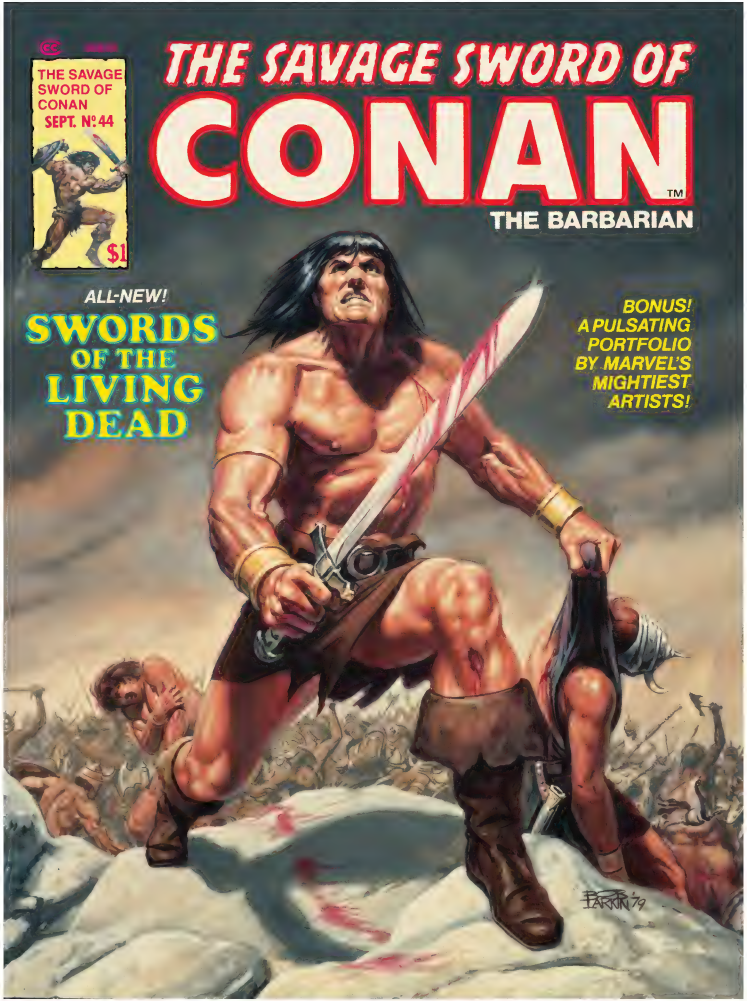
LEFT AND BELOW
Savage Sword of Conan No. 41. Bêlit character sketches. John Buscema. June 1979.

The saga of the she-pirate Bêlit had been a plot staple for over three years of the *Conan the Barbarian* color comics and was winding up with a giant-sized 100th issue. Roy Thomas took the opportunity to share John Buscema's original character designs, including a rejected version with blond hair, as supplemental material in *Savage Sword*.

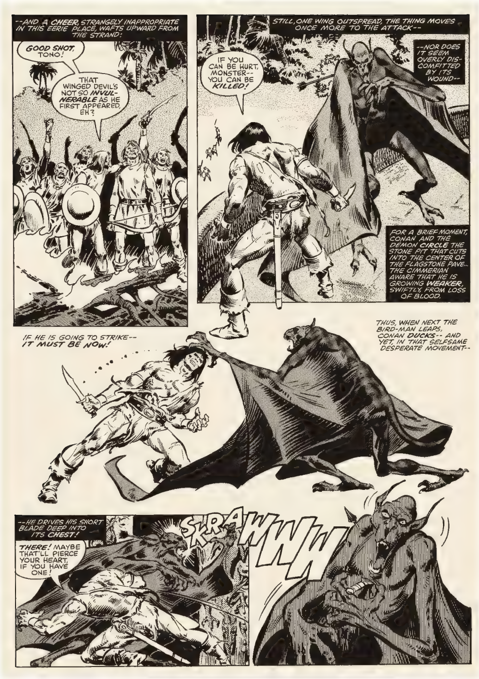
OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 42. Pinup. Tony DeZuniga. July 1979.





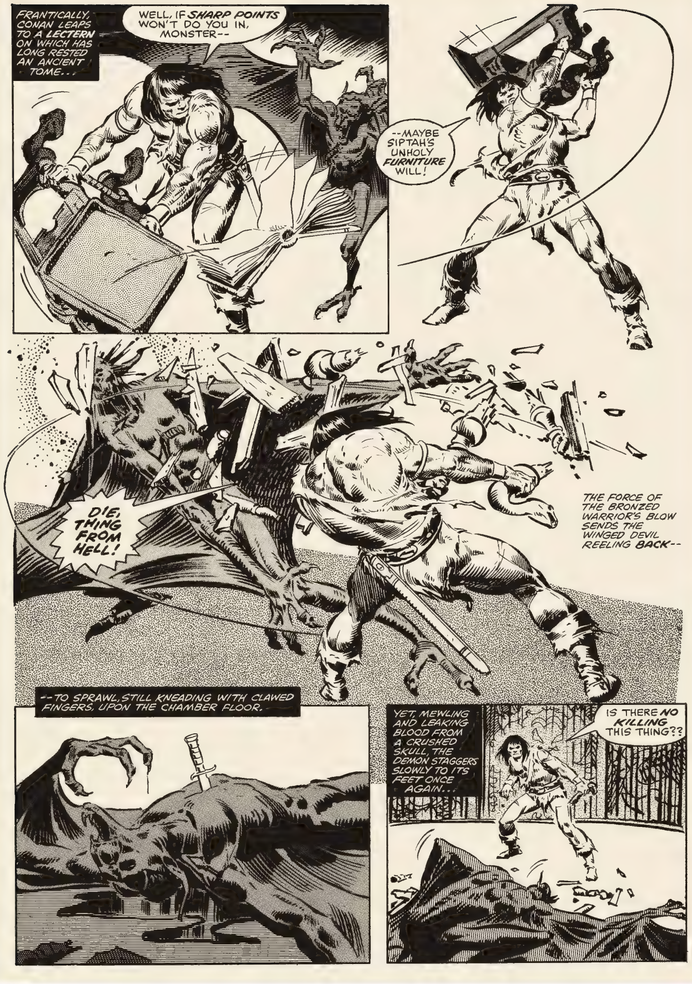

THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
SEPT. No 44
$1
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF
CONAN
TM
THE BARBARIAN
ALL-NEW!
SWORDS OF THE LIVING DEAD
BONUS! A PULSATING PORTFOLIO BY MARVEL'S MIGHTIEST ARTISTS!
B. LARKIN '79

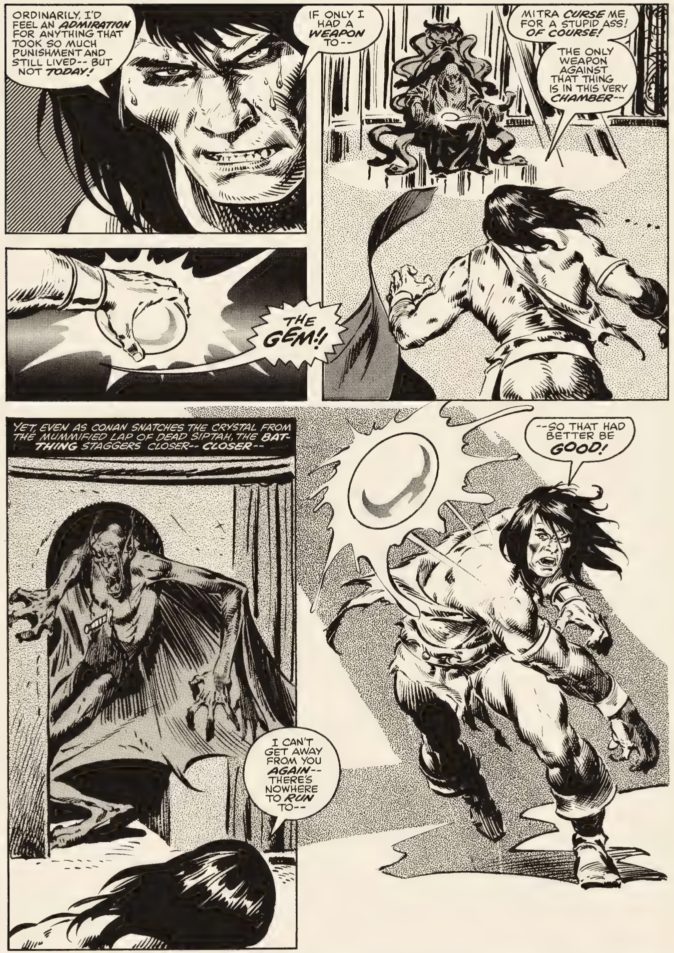
OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 44.
Cover. Bob Larkin. September 1979.

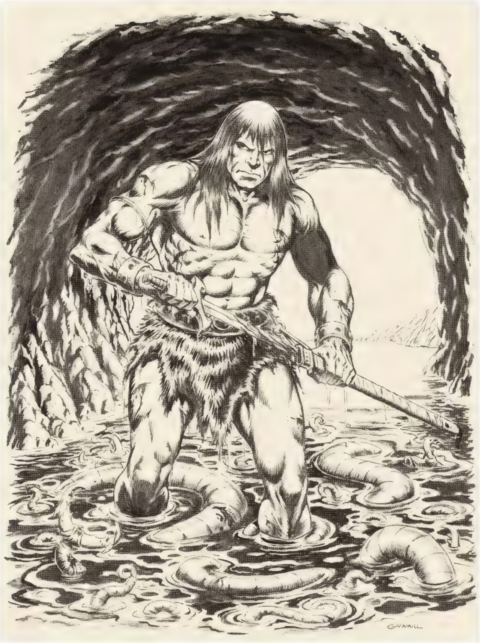

--AND A CHEER, STRANGELY INAPPROPRIATE IN THIS EERIE PLACE, WAFTS UPWARD FROM THE STRAND:
GOOD SHOT, TONO!
THAT WINGED DEVIL'S NOT SO INVULNERABLE AS HE FIRST APPEARED, EH?
STILL, ONE WING OUTSPREAD, THE THING MOVES ONCE MORE TO THE ATTACK--
IF YOU CAN BE HURT, MONSTER-- YOU CAN BE KILLED!
--NOR DOES IT SEEM OVERLY DISCOMFITTED BY ITS WOUND--
FOR A BRIEF MOMENT, CONAN AND THE DEMON CIRCLE THE STONE PIT THAT CUTS INTO THE CENTER OF THE FLAGSTONE PAVE... THE CIMMERIAN AWARE THAT HE IS GROWING WEAKER, SWIFTLY, FROM LOSS OF BLOOD.
IF HE IS GOING TO STRIKE-- IT MUST BE NOW!
THUS, WHEN NEXT THE BIRD-MAN LEAPS, CONAN DUCKS-- AND YET, IN THAT SELFSAME DESPERATE MOVEMENT--
--HE DRIVES HIS SHORT BLADE DEEP INTO ITS CHEST!
THERE! MAYBE THAT'LL PIERCE YOUR HEART, IF YOU HAVE ONE!
SKRAWWWW

ABOVE AND FOLLOWING SPREAD
Savage Sword of Conan No. 45. Interior art, "The Gem in the Tower."
Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Tony DeZuniga.
October 1979.

In "The Gem in the Tower," another de Camp and Carter tale adapted for *Savage Sword*, Conan and his pirate crew are besieged by a seemingly invulnerable bat creature guarding an impenetrable tower where treasures are rumored to await. Buscema paces the suspenseful tale with precision as Conan uses his wits as well as his brawn to win the day.

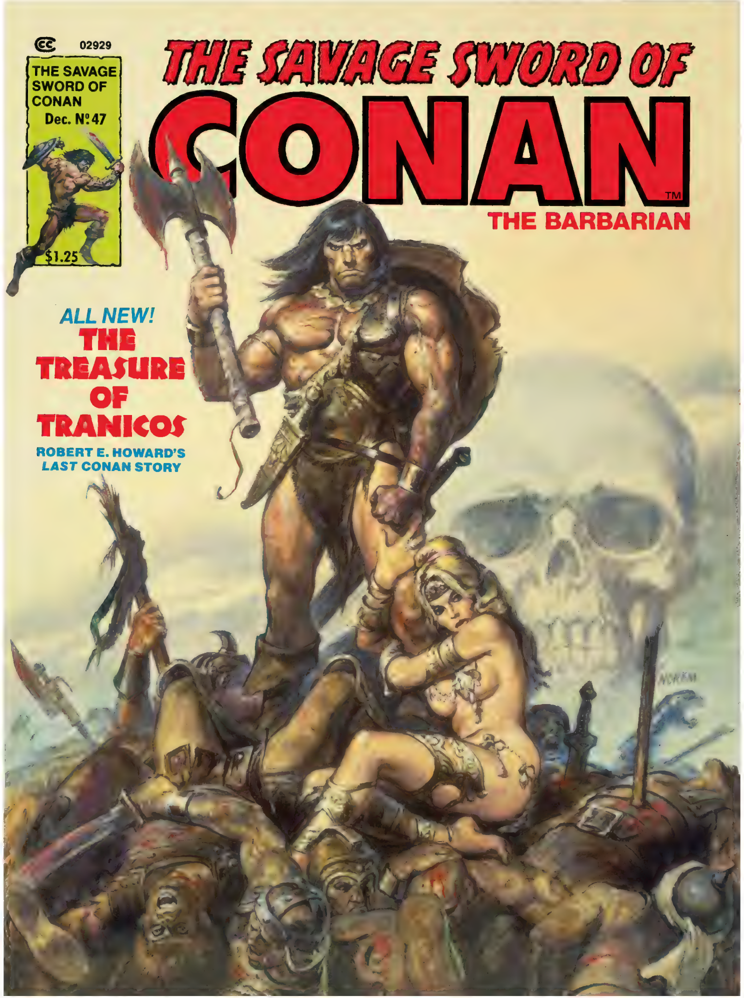

FRANTICALLY, CONAN LEAPS TO A LECTERN ON WHICH HAS LONG RESTED AN ANCIENT TOME...
WELL, IF SHARP POINTS WON'T DO YOU IN, MONSTER--
--MAYBE SIPTAH'S UNHOLY FURNITURE WILL!
DIE, THING FROM HELL!
THE FORCE OF THE BRONZED WARRIOR'S BLOW SENDS THE WINGED DEVIL REELING BACK--
--TO SPRAWL, STILL KNEADING WITH CLAWED FINGERS, UPON THE CHAMBER FLOOR.
YET, MEWLING AND LEAKING BLOOD FROM A CRUSHED SKULL, THE DEMON STAGGERS SLOWLY TO ITS FEET ONCE AGAIN...
IS THERE NO KILLING THIS THING??

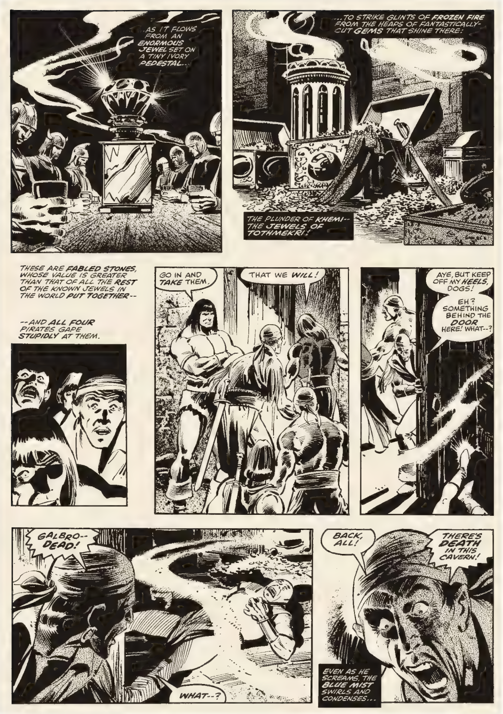

ORDINARILY, I'D FEEL AN ADMIRATION FOR ANYTHING THAT TOOK SO MUCH PUNISHMENT AND STILL LIVED-- BUT NOT TODAY!
IF ONLY I HAD A WEAPON TO--
MITRA CURSE ME FOR A STUPID ASS! OF COURSE!
THE ONLY WEAPON AGAINST THAT THING IS IN THIS VERY CHAMBER--
THE GEM!!
YET, EVEN AS CONAN SNATCHES THE CRYSTAL FROM THE MUMMIFIED LAP OF DEAD SIPTAH, THE BAT-THING STAGGERS CLOSER-- CLOSER--
--SO THAT HAD BETTER BE GOOD!
I CAN'T GET AWAY FROM YOU AGAIN-- THERE'S NOWHERE TO RUN TO--



LEFT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 46. Pinup.
Kerry Gammill. November 1979.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 47.
Cover. Earl Norem. December 1979.

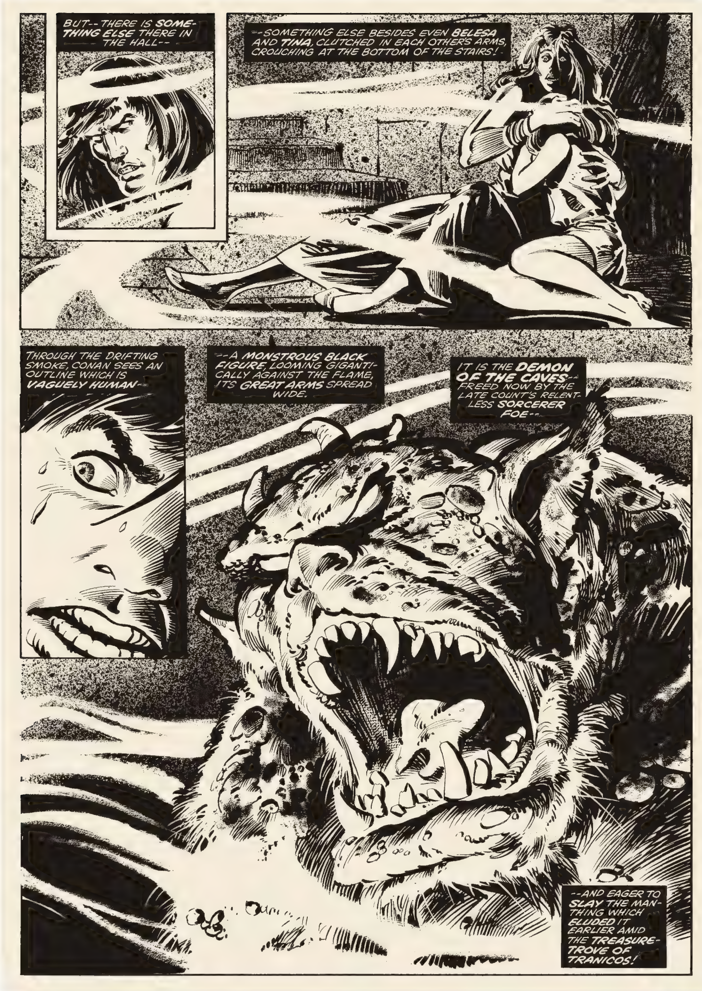

CC
02929
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
Dec. No. 47
$1.25
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF
CONAN
TM
THE BARBARIAN
ALL NEW!
THE TREASURE OF TRANICOS
ROBERT E. HOWARD'S LAST CONAN STORY
NOREM



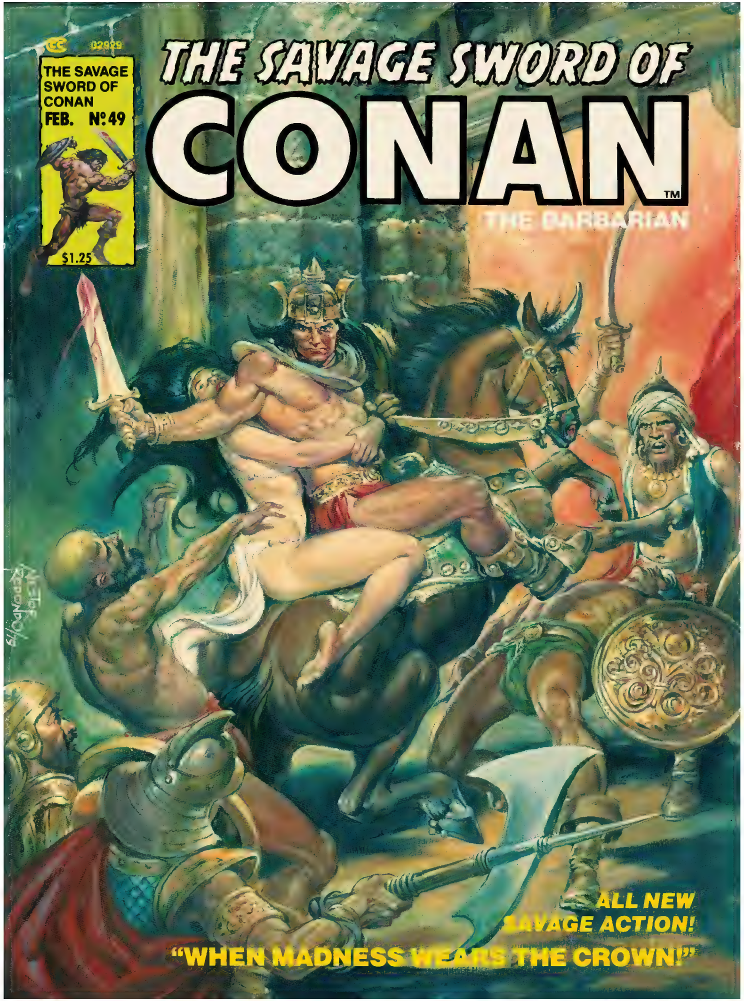
...AS IT FLOWS FROM AN ENORMOUS JEWEL SET ON A TINY IVORY PEDESTAL...
...TO STRIKE GLINTS OF FROZEN FIRE FROM THE HEAPS OF FANTASTICALLY-CUT GEMS THAT SHINE THERE:
THE PLUNDER OF KHEMI-- THE JEWELS OF TOTHMEKRI!
THESE ARE FABLED STONES, WHOSE VALUE IS GREATER THAN THAT OF ALL THE REST OF THE KNOWN JEWELS IN THE WORLD PUT TOGETHER--
--AND ALL FOUR PIRATES GAPE STUPIDLY AT THEM.
GO IN AND TAKE THEM.
THAT WE WILL!
AYE, BUT KEEP OFF MY HEELS, DOGS!
EH? SOMETHING BEHIND THE DOOR HERE! WHAT--?
GALBRO-- DEAD!
WHAT--?
BACK, ALL!
THERE'S DEATH IN THIS CAVERN!
EVEN AS HE SCREAMS, THE BLUE MIST SWIRLS AND CONDENSES...

ABOVE AND OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 48. Interior art, "A Wind Blows from Stygia." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Klaus Janson. January 1980.

"The Treasure of Tranicos" was a posthumous collaboration between de Camp and Howard based on a newly discovered manuscript by the original author. A taut thriller heavy with supernatural elements, fresh new talent Klaus Janson was on board as inker, helping establish the edgy mood before returning to his regular gig on *Daredevil* with Frank Miller.



BUT--THERE IS SOMETHING ELSE THERE IN THE HALL--
--SOMETHING ELSE BESIDES EVEN BELESA AND TINA, CLUTCHED IN EACH OTHER'S ARMS, CROUCHING AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS!
THROUGH THE DRIFTING SMOKE, CONAN SEES AN OUTLINE WHICH IS VAGUELY HUMAN--
--A MONSTROUS BLACK FIGURE, LOOMING GIGANTICALLY AGAINST THE FLAME, ITS GREAT ARMS SPREAD WIDE.
IT IS THE DEMON OF THE CAVES-- FREED NOW BY THE LATE COUNT'S RELENTLESS SORCERER FOE--
--AND EAGER TO SLAY THE MAN-THING WHICH ELUDED IT EARLIER AMID THE TREASURE-TROVE OF TRANICOS!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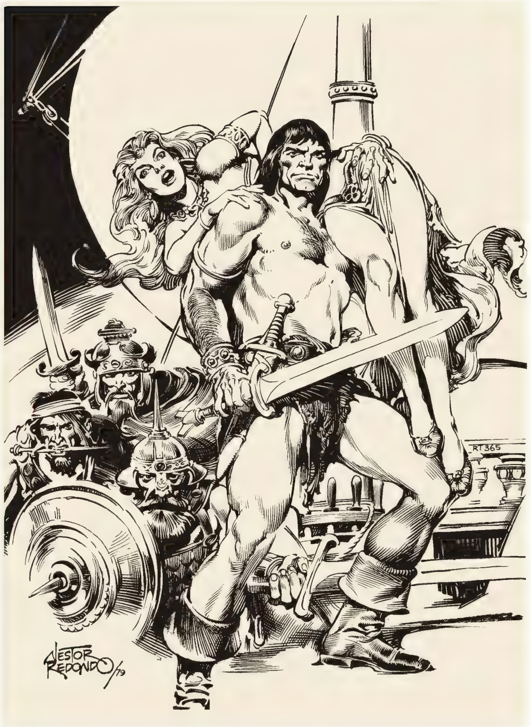
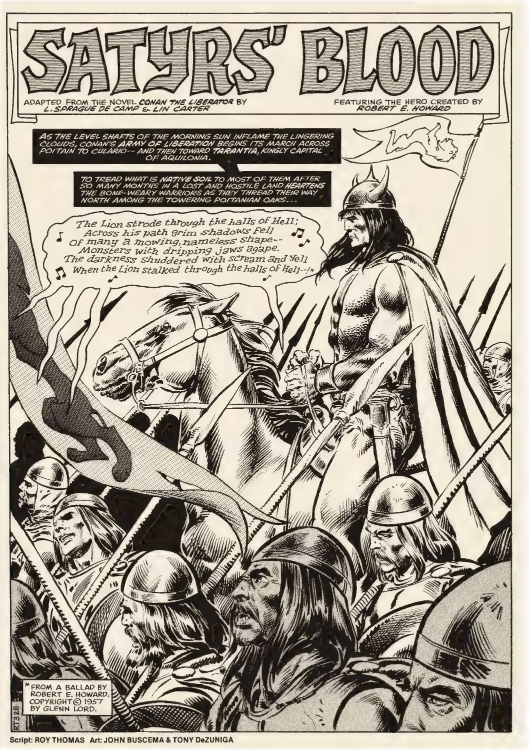
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
FEB. Nº 49
$1.25
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF
CONAN™
THE BARBARIAN
NESTOR REDONDO/79
ALL NEW SAVAGE ACTION!
"WHEN MADNESS WEARS THE CROWN!"

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 49. Cover. Nestor Redondo. February 1980.

BELOW
Savage Sword of Conan No. 51. Pinup. Nestor Redondo. April 1980.

A veteran of the comic book industry in his native Philippines, Nestor Redondo arrived in America in the 1970s, working extensively on DC's line of horror anthologies. His work for Marvel was restricted mainly to Conan before he moved into animation in the '80s.

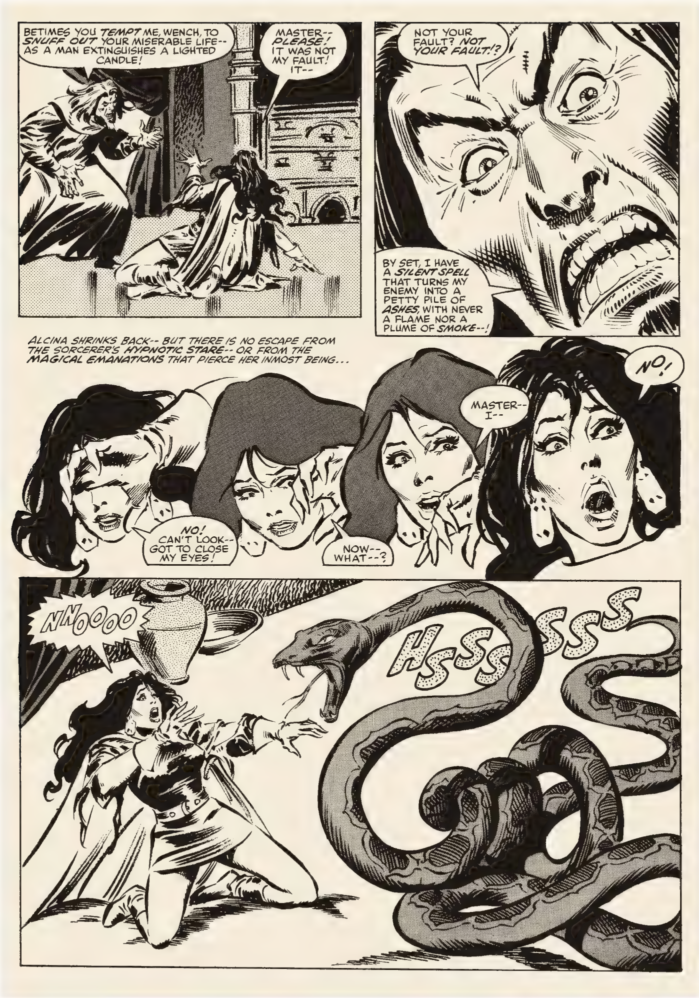

RT 365
NESTOR REDONDO/79

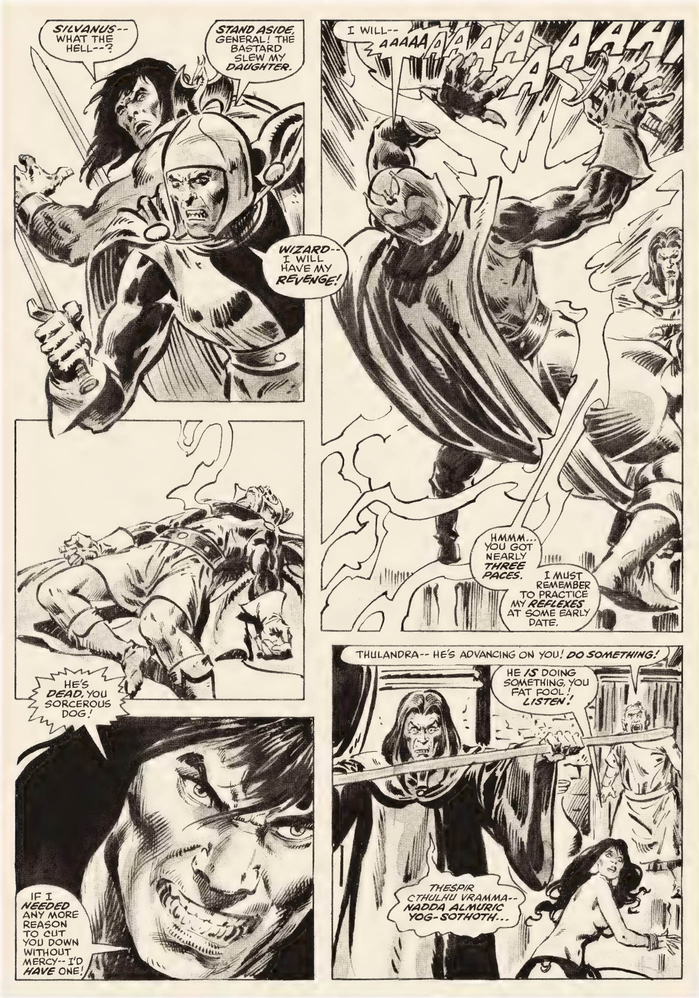

SATYRS' BLOOD
ADAPTED FROM THE NOVEL CONAN THE LIBERATOR BY L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP & LIN CARTER
FEATURING THE HERO CREATED BY ROBERT E. HOWARD
AS THE LEVEL SHAFTS OF THE MORNING SUN INFLAME THE LINGERING CLOUDS, CONAN'S ARMY OF LIBERATION BEGINS ITS MARCH ACROSS POITAIN TO CULARIO-- AND THEN TOWARD TARANTIA, KINGLY CAPITAL OF AQUILONIA.
TO TREAD WHAT IS NATIVE SOIL TO MOST OF THEM AFTER SO MANY MONTHS IN A LOST AND HOSTILE LAND HEARTENS THE BONE-WEARY WARRIORS AS THEY THREAD THEIR WAY NORTH AMONG THE TOWERING POITANIAN OAKS...
The Lion strode through the halls of Hell; Across his path grim shadows fell Of many a mowing, nameless shape-- Monsters with dripping jaws agape. The darkness shuddered with scream and yell When the Lion stalked through the halls of Hell--!*
*FROM A BALLAD BY ROBERT E. HOWARD. COPYRIGHT © 1957 BY GLENN LORD.
KT328

Script: ROY THOMAS Art: JOHN BUSCEMA & TONY DeZUNIGA

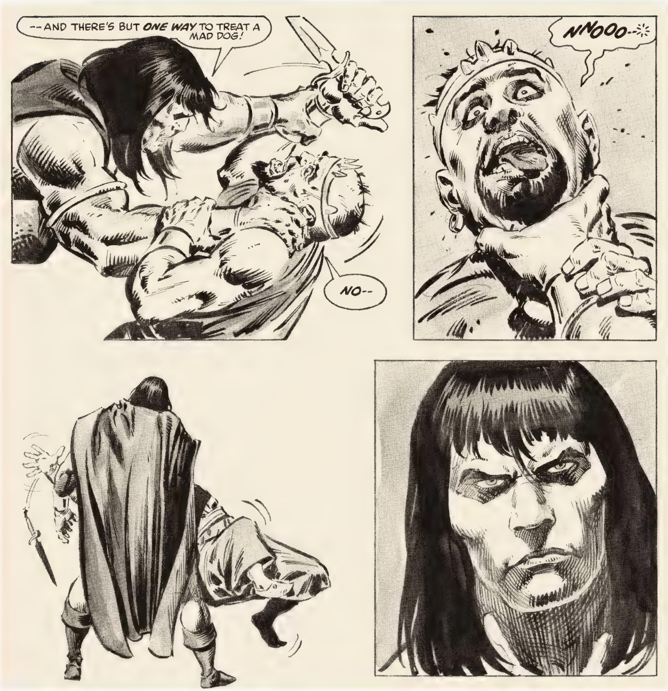
ABOVE AND OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 51. Interior art, "Satyr's Blood." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Tony DeZuniga. April 1980.

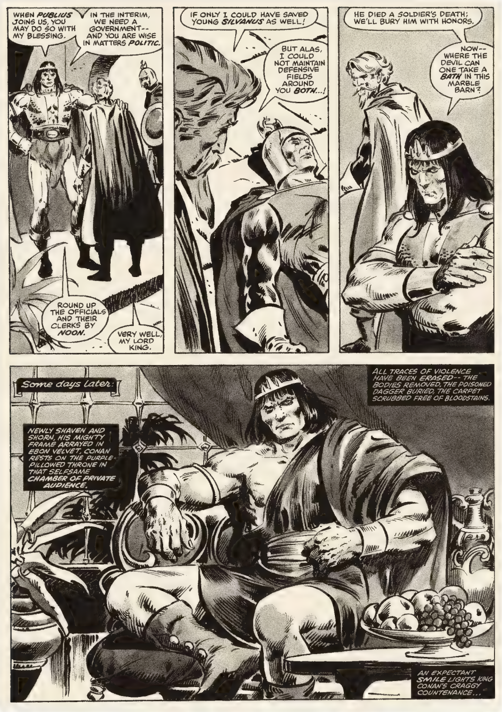
Conan gets in touch with his regal nature in Thomas and Buscema's multi-part adaptation of *Conan the Liberator* by de Camp and Carter, leading an army of loyalists to face the decadent King Numedides and his sorcerous enforcer, Thulandra Thuu.


BETIMES YOU TEMPT ME, WENCH, TO SNUFF OUT YOUR MISERABLE LIFE-- AS A MAN EXTINGUISHES A LIGHTED CANDLE!
MASTER-- PLEASE! IT WAS NOT MY FAULT! IT--
NOT YOUR FAULT? NOT YOUR FAULT!?
BY SET, I HAVE A SILENT SPELL THAT TURNS MY ENEMY INTO A PETTY PILE OF ASHES, WITH NEVER A FLAME NOR A PLUME OF SMOKE--!
ALCINA SHRINKS BACK-- BUT THERE IS NO ESCAPE FROM THE SORCERER'S HYPNOTIC STARE-- OR FROM THE MAGICAL EMANATIONS THAT PIERCE HER INMOST BEING...
NO! CAN'T LOOK-- GOT TO CLOSE MY EYES!
NOW-- WHAT--?
MASTER-- I--
NO!
NNOOOO
HSSSSSSS


SILVANUS-- WHAT THE HELL--?
STAND ASIDE, GENERAL! THE BASTARD SLEW MY DAUGHTER.
WIZARD-- I WILL HAVE MY REVENGE!
I WILL-- AAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!
HMMM... YOU GOT NEARLY THREE PACES.
I MUST REMEMBER TO PRACTICE MY REFLEXES AT SOME EARLY DATE.
HE'S DEAD, YOU SORCEROUS DOG!
IF I NEEDED ANY MORE REASON TO CUT YOU DOWN WITHOUT MERCY-- I'D HAVE ONE!
THULANDRA-- HE'S ADVANCING ON YOU! DO SOMETHING!
HE IS DOING SOMETHING, YOU FAT FOOL! LISTEN!
THESPIR CTHULHU VRAMMA-- NADDA ALMURIC YOG-SOTHOTH...

THIS AND FOLLOWING SPREAD
Savage Sword of Conan No. 52. Interior art, "Conan the Liberator." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Tony DeZuniga. May 1980.

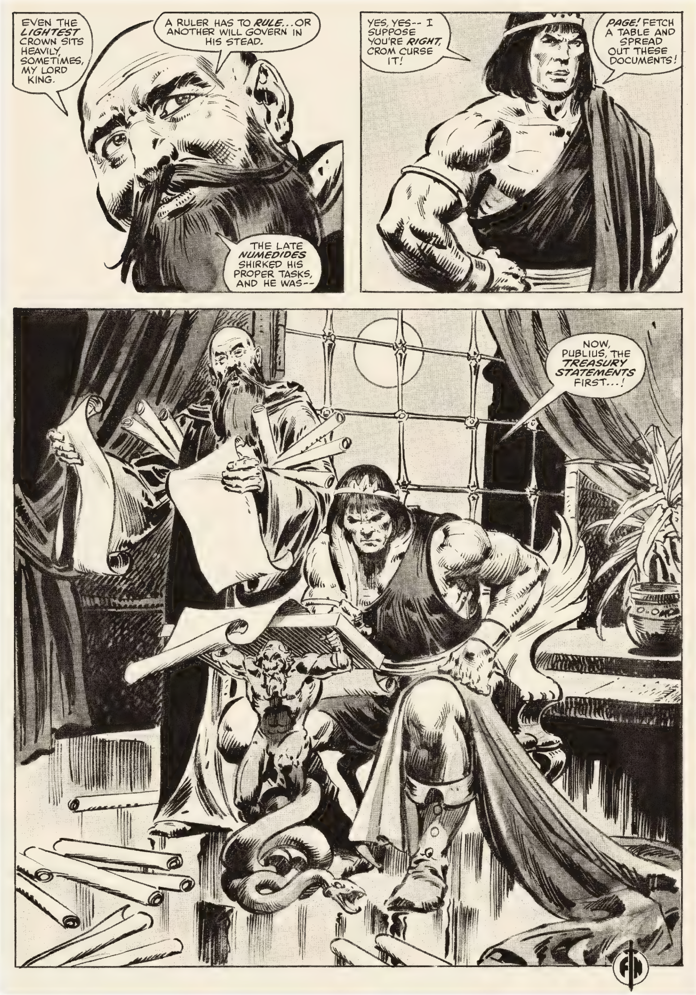

--AND THERE'S BUT ONE WAY TO TREAT A MAD DOG!
NNOOO--
NO--


WHEN PUBLIUS JOINS US, YOU MAY DO SO WITH MY BLESSING.
IN THE INTERIM, WE NEED A GOVERNMENT-- AND YOU ARE WISE IN MATTERS POLITIC.
ROUND UP THE OFFICIALS AND THEIR CLERKS BY NOON.
VERY WELL, MY LORD KING.
IF ONLY I COULD HAVE SAVED YOUNG SILVANUS AS WELL!
BUT ALAS, I COULD NOT MAINTAIN DEFENSIVE FIELDS AROUND YOU BOTH...!
HE DIED A SOLDIER'S DEATH; WE'LL BURY HIM WITH HONORS.
NOW-- WHERE THE DEVIL CAN ONE TAKE A BATH IN THIS MARBLE BARN?
Some days later:
ALL TRACES OF VIOLENCE HAVE BEEN ERASED-- THE BODIES REMOVED, THE POISONED DAGGER BURIED, THE CARPET SCRUBBED FREE OF BLOODSTAINS.
NEWLY SHAVEN AND SHORN, HIS MIGHTY FRAME ARRAYED IN EBON VELVET, CONAN RESTS ON THE PURPLE-PILLOWED THRONE IN THAT SELFSAME CHAMBER OF PRIVATE AUDIENCE.
AN EXPECTANT SMILE LIGHTS KING CONAN'S CRAGGY COUNTENANCE...

First a thief, then a soldier, next a buccaneer: Finally, Conan meets his destiny as leader of men. The color title *King Conan* had launched only a few months previously, but its stories began with a 60-year-old Conan long established as ruler of Aquilonia; the last chapter of "Conan the Liberator" in *Savage Sword* showed his first moments under the crown.

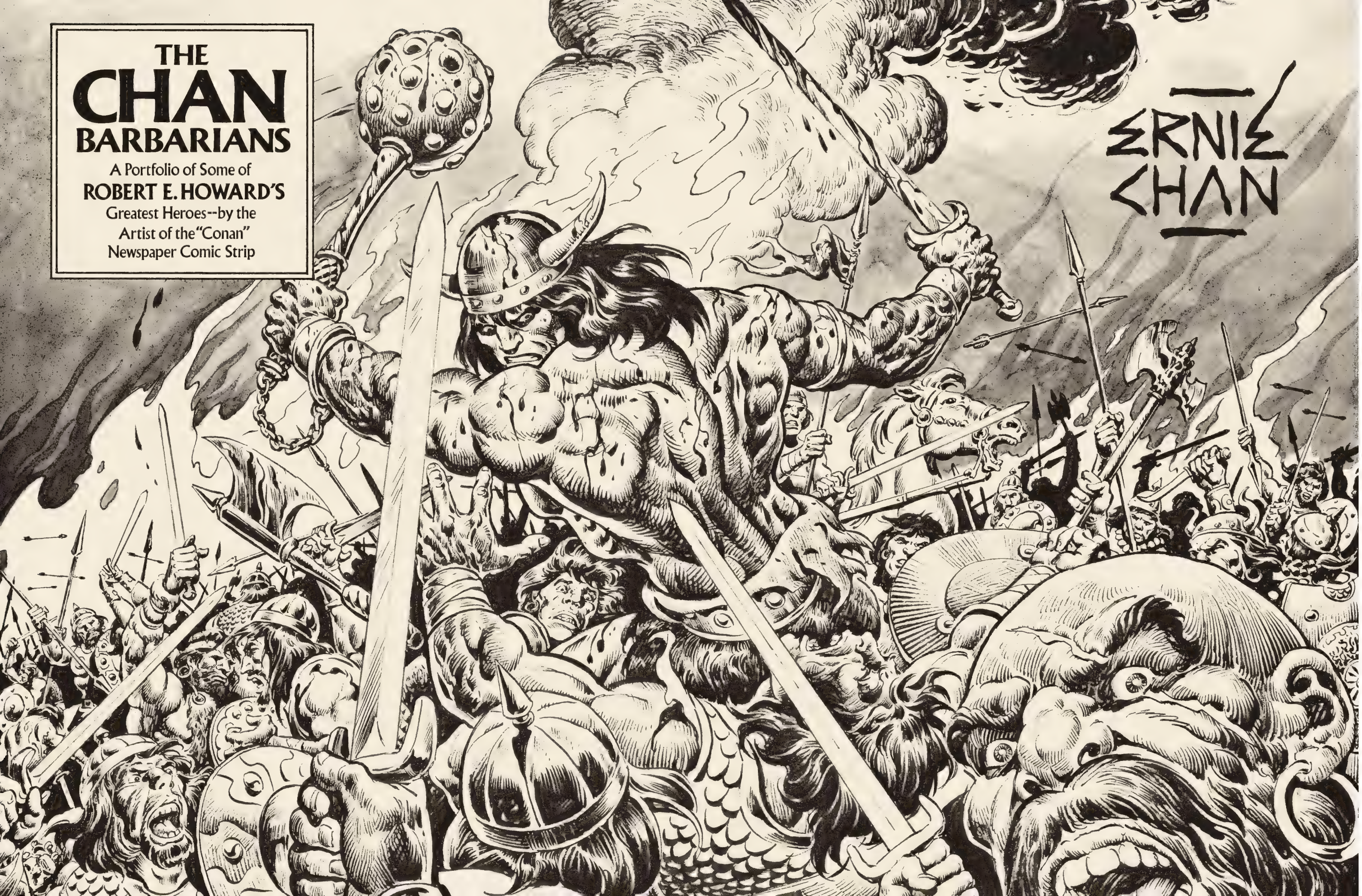
PAGES 114-119
Savage Sword of Conan No. 52. Pinups. Ernie Chan. May 1980.

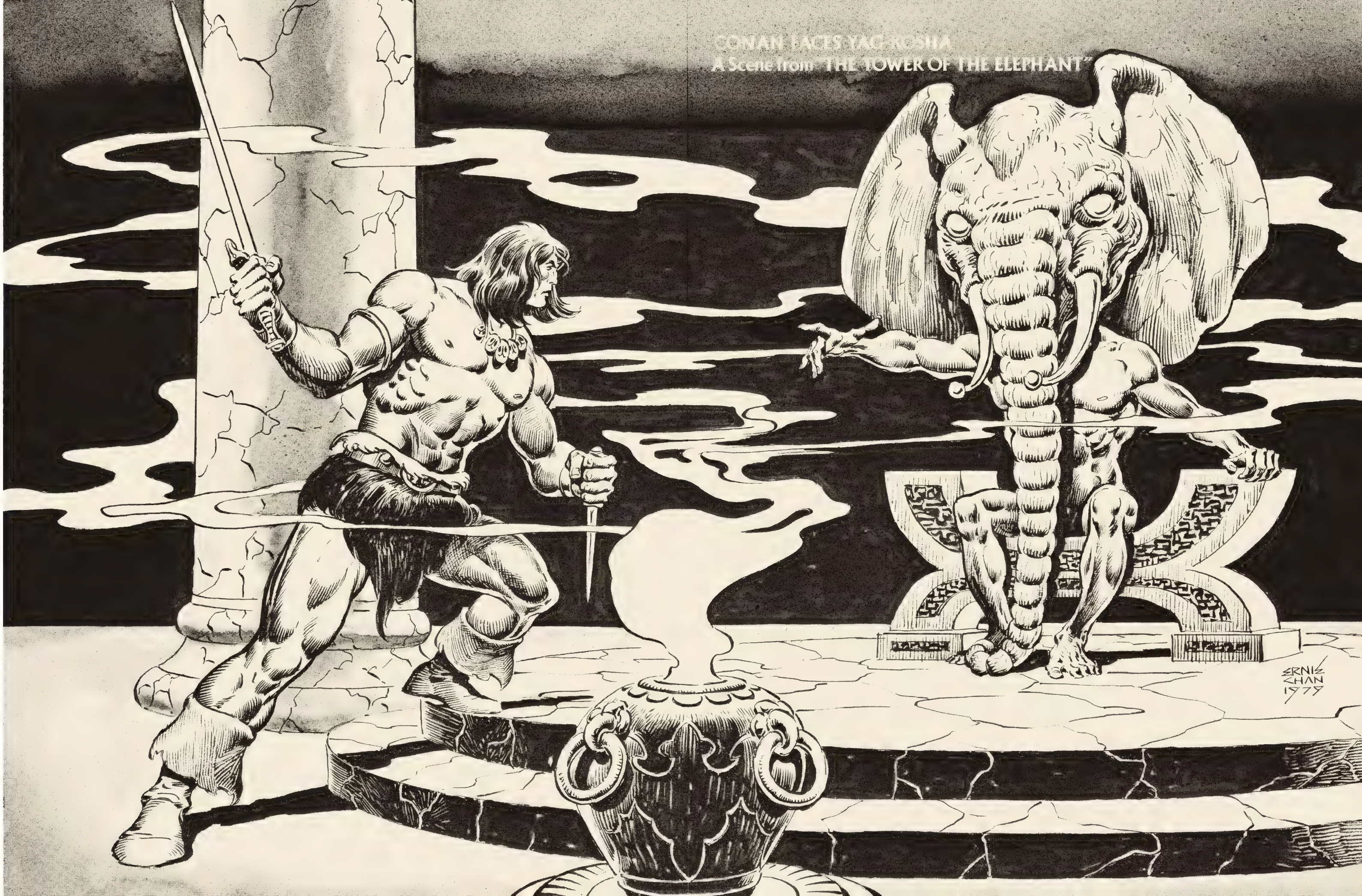
Alfredo Alcala wasn't the only inker of John Buscema's pencils to receive acclaim from Conan fans. Ernie Chan's coarser, more savage touch to Buscema's linework drew raves as much, if not more, than Alcala, particularly due to Chan's prolificacy at working behind "Big John" on *Conan the Barbarian* and *The Savage Sword of Conan*. But inking was only a part of the story on Chan, who was another member of DeZuniga's seemingly bottomless well of "Tribe" talent from the Philippines. Chan would also pencil and ink a series of his own Conan stories in both the color comic and *Savage Sword*, and was honored with several spotlight features of his pinup work in both single- and double-page spreads.


EVEN THE LIGHTEST CROWN SITS HEAVILY, SOMETIMES, MY LORD KING.
A RULER HAS TO RULE...OR ANOTHER WILL GOVERN IN HIS STEAD.
THE LATE NUMEDIDES SHIRKED HIS PROPER TASKS, AND HE WAS--
YES, YES-- I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT, CROM CURSE IT!
PAGE! FETCH A TABLE AND SPREAD OUT THESE DOCUMENTS!
NOW, PUBLIUS, THE TREASURY STATEMENTS FIRST...!

THE CHAN BARBARIANS

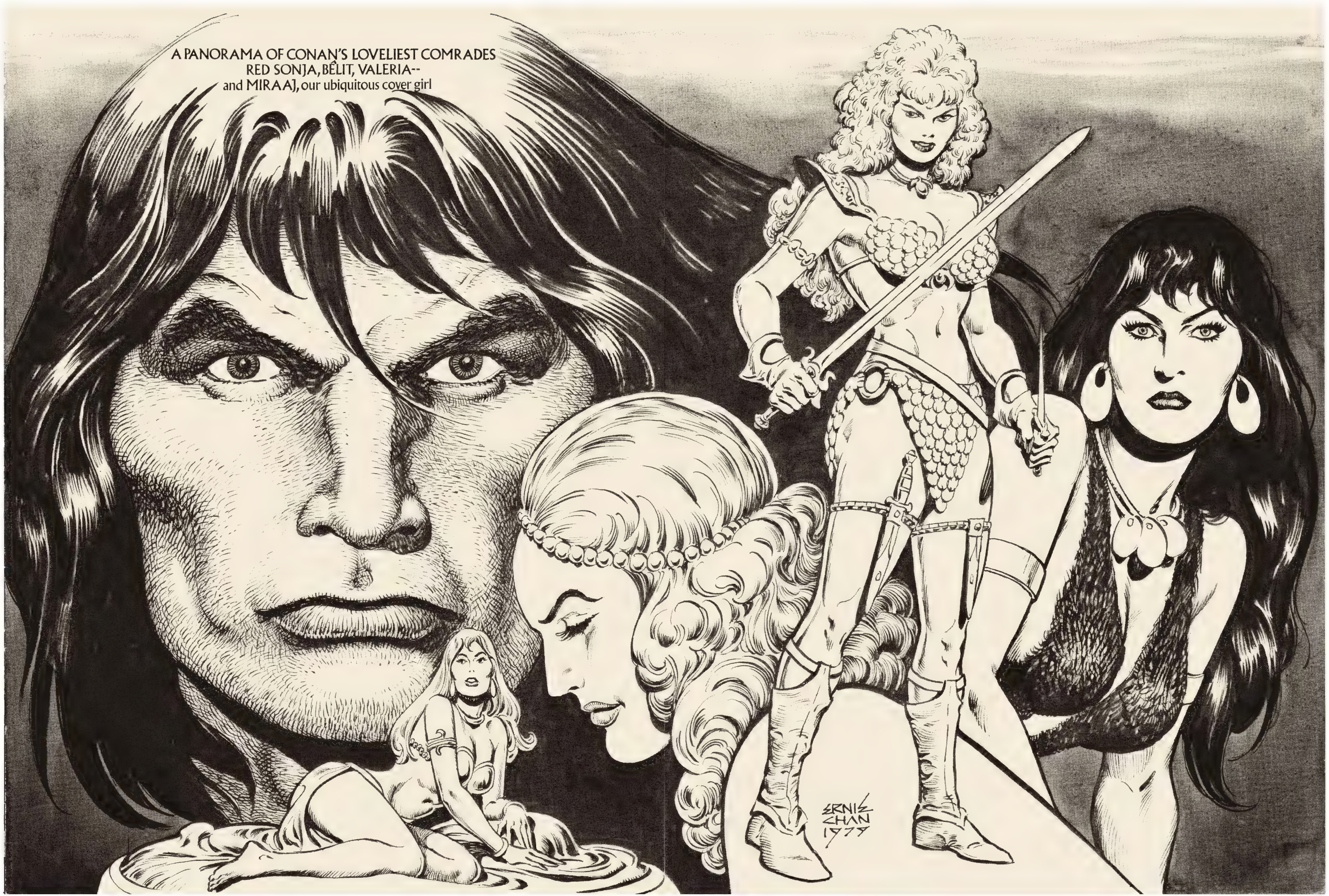
A Portfolio of Some of
ROBERT E. HOWARD'S
Greatest Heroes--by the
Artist of the "Conan"
Newspaper Comic Strip

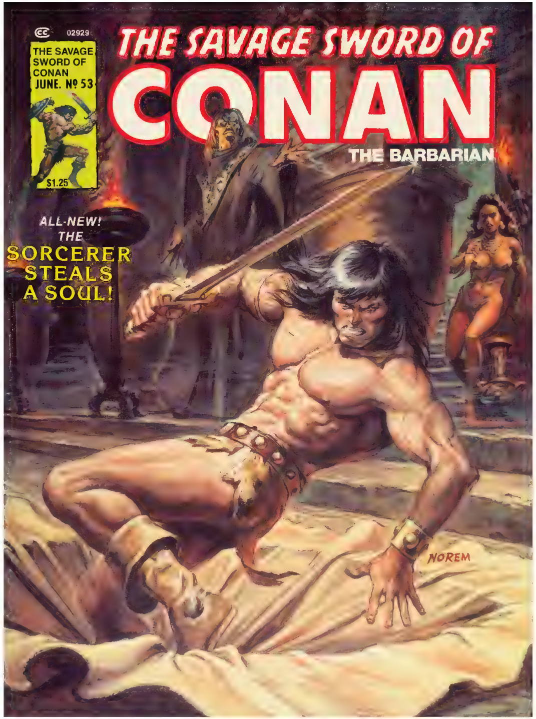




CONAN FACES YAG-KOSHA
A Scene from "THE TOWER OF THE ELEPHANT"

ERNIE CHAN 1979


A PANORAMA OF CONAN'S LOVELIEST COMRADES
RED SONJA, BÊLIT, VALERIA--
and MIRAAJ, our ubiquitous cover girl
ERNIE CHAN
1977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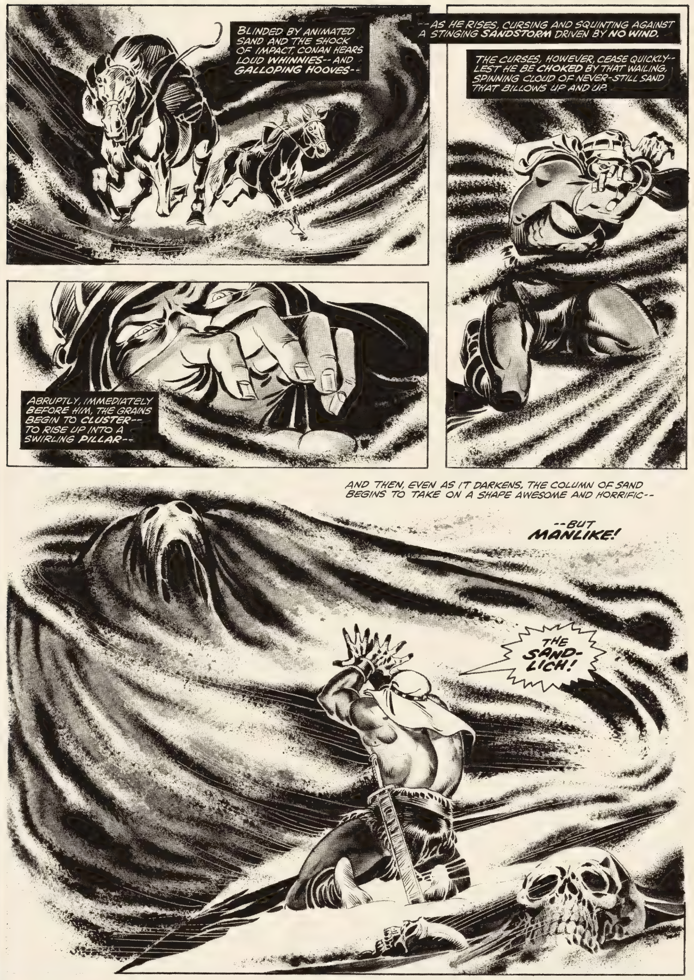
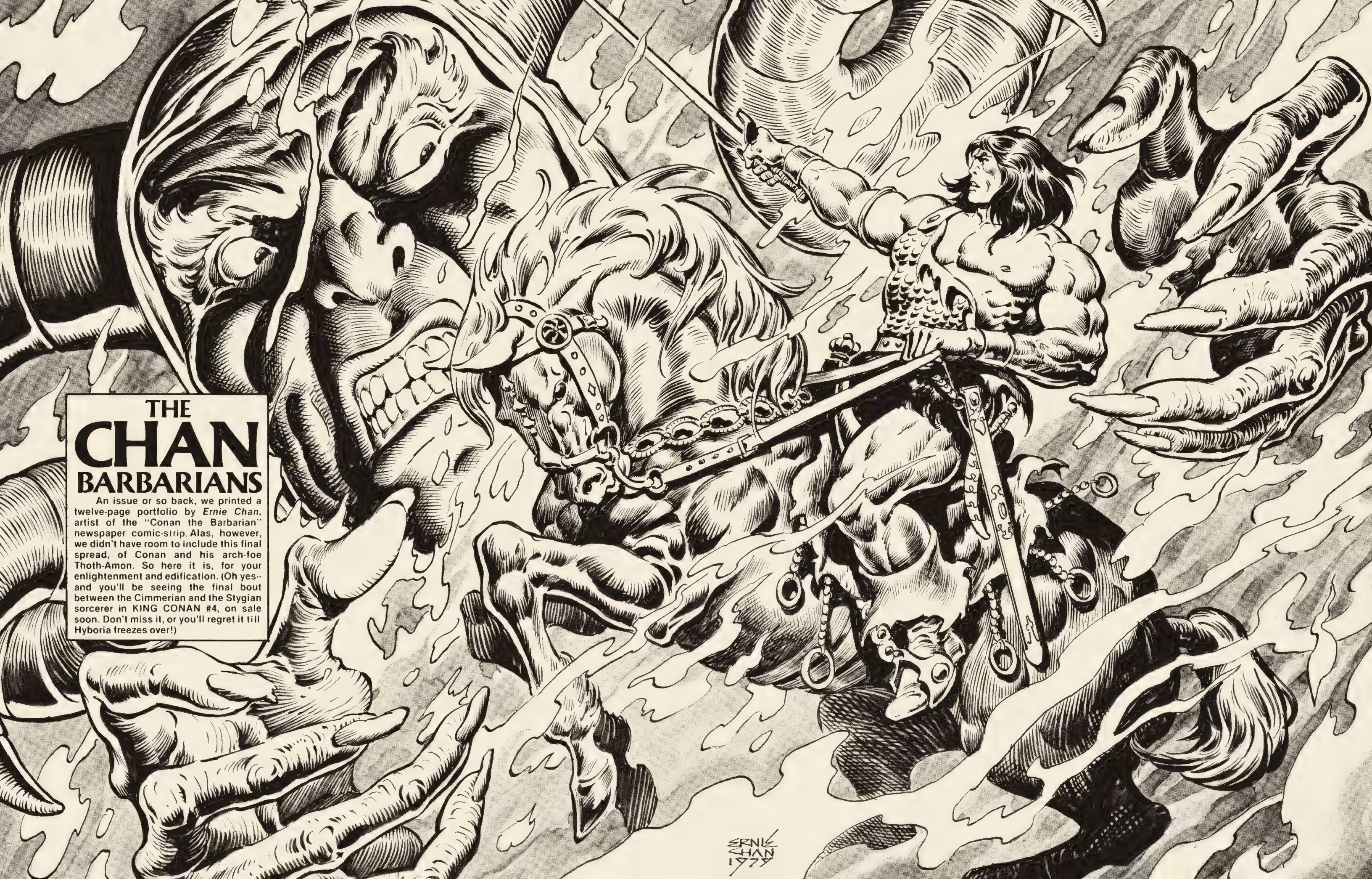
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
JUNE. Nº 53
$1.25
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF
CONAN
THE BARBARIAN
ALL-NEW!
THE SORCERER STEALS A SOUL!
NOREM

ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 53. Cover. Earl Norem. June 1980.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 54. Interior art, "The Stalker amid the Sands." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Ricardo Villamonte. July 1980.

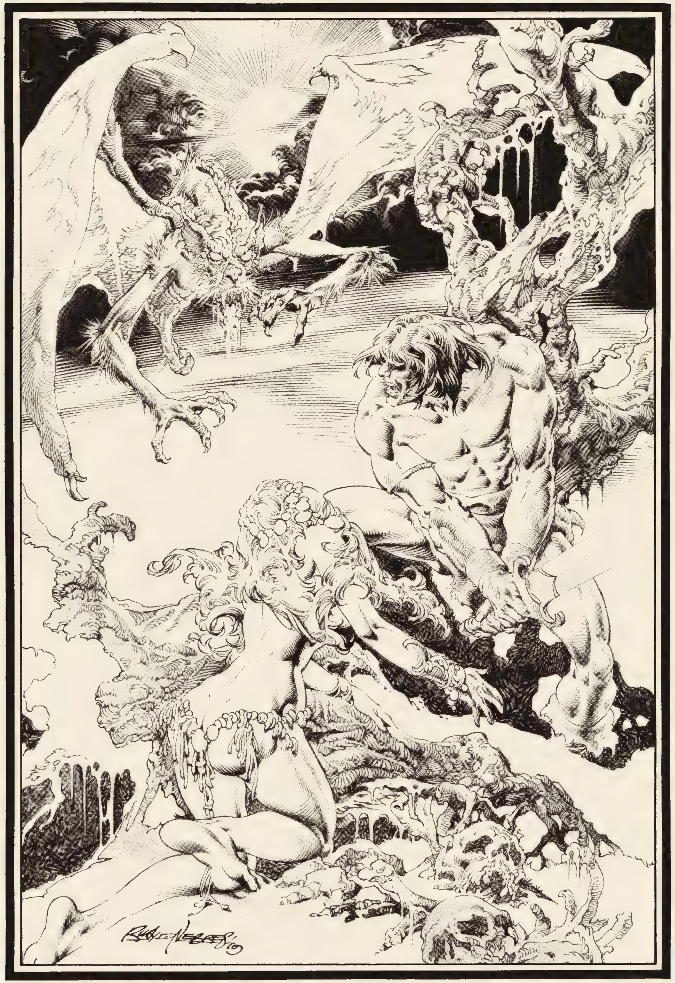
PAGES 122-123
Savage Sword of Conan No. 54. Pinup. Ernie Chan. July 1980.


BLINDED BY ANIMATED SAND AND THE SHOCK OF IMPACT, CONAN HEARS LOUD WHINNIES-- AND GALLOPING HOOVES--
--AS HE RISES, CURSING AND SQUINTING AGAINST A STINGING SANDSTORM DRIVEN BY NO WIND.
THE CURSES, HOWEVER, CEASE QUICKLY-- LEST HE BE CHOKED BY THAT WAILING, SPINNING CLOUD OF NEVER-STILL SAND THAT BILLOWS UP AND UP.
ABRUPTLY, IMMEDIATELY BEFORE HIM, THE GRAINS BEGIN TO CLUSTER-- TO RISE UP INTO A SWIRLING PILLAR--
AND THEN, EVEN AS IT DARKENS, THE COLUMN OF SAND BEGINS TO TAKE ON A SHAPE AWESOME AND HORRIFIC--
--BUT MANLIKE!
THE SAND-LICH!

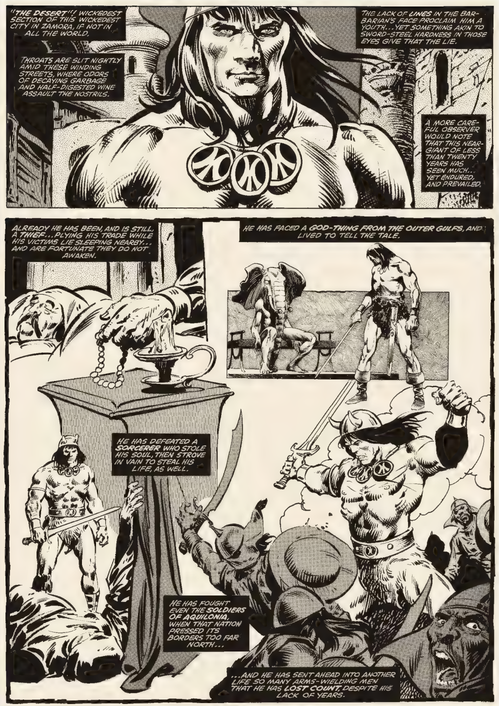


THE CHAN BARBARIANS

An issue or so back, we printed a twelve-page portfolio by *Ernie Chan*, artist of the "Conan the Barbarian" newspaper comic-strip. Alas, however, we didn't have room to include this final spread, of Conan and his arch-foe Thoth-Amon. So here it is, for your enlightenment and edification. (Oh yes--and you'll be seeing the final bout between the Cimmerian and the Stygian sorcerer in KING CONAN #4, on sale soon. Don't miss it, or you'll regret it till Hyboria freezes over!)

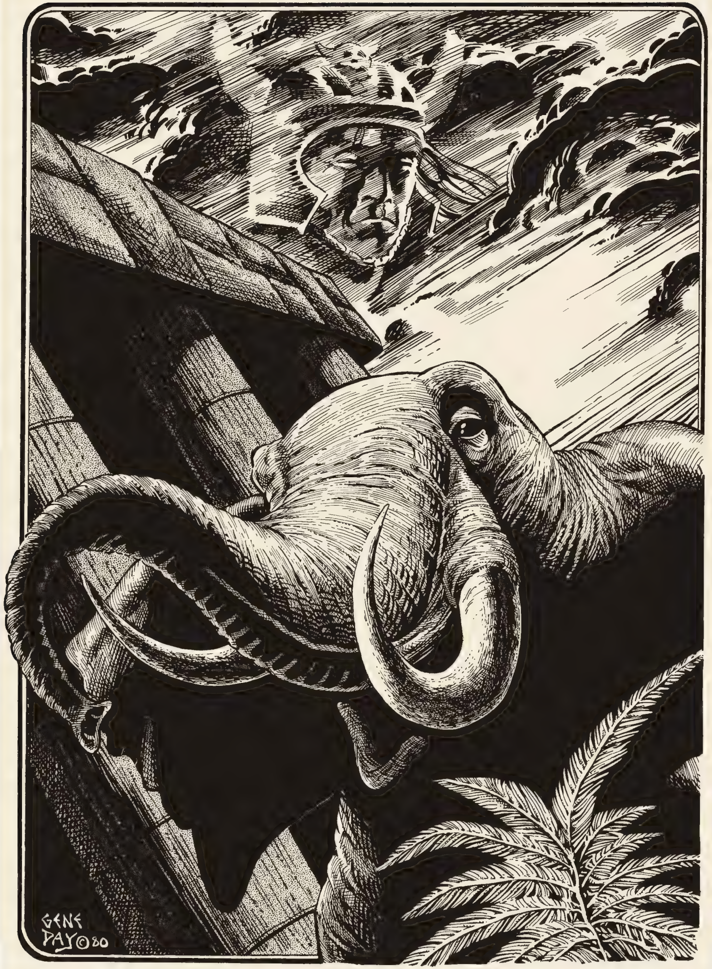


OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 55.
Pinup. Rudy Nebres. August 1980.


"THE DESERT"! WICKEDEST SECTION OF THIS WICKEDEST CITY IN ZAMORA, IF NOT IN ALL THE WORLD.
THROATS ARE SLIT NIGHTLY AMID THESE WINDING STREETS, WHERE ODORS OF DECAYING GARBAGE AND HALF-DIGESTED WINE ASSAULT THE NOSTRILS.
THE LACK OF LINES IN THE BARBARIAN'S FACE PROCLAIM HIM A YOUTH...YET SOMETHING AKIN TO SWORD-STEEL HARDNESS IN THOSE EYES GIVE THAT THE LIE.
A MORE CAREFUL OBSERVER WOULD NOTE THAT THIS NEAR-GIANT OF LESS THAN TWENTY YEARS HAS SEEN MUCH... YET ENDURED, AND PREVAILED.
ALREADY HE HAS BEEN, AND IS STILL, A THIEF...PLYING HIS TRADE WHILE HIS VICTIMS LIE SLEEPING NEARBY... AND ARE FORTUNATE THEY DO NOT AWAKEN.
HE HAS FACED A GOD-THING FROM THE OUTER GULFS, AND LIVED TO TELL THE TALE.
HE HAS DEFEATED A SORCERER WHO STOLE HIS SOUL, THEN STROVE IN VAIN TO STEAL HIS LIFE, AS WELL.
HE HAS FOUGHT EVEN THE SOLDIERS OF AQUILONIA, WHEN THAT NATION PRESSED ITS BORDERS TOO FAR NORTH...
...AND HE HAS SENT AHEAD INTO ANOTHER LIFE SO MANY ARMS-WIELDING MEN THAT HE HAS LOST COUNT, DESPITE HIS LACK OF YEARS.

ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 56. Interior art, "The Sword of Skelos."
Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Tony DeZuniga.
September 1980.

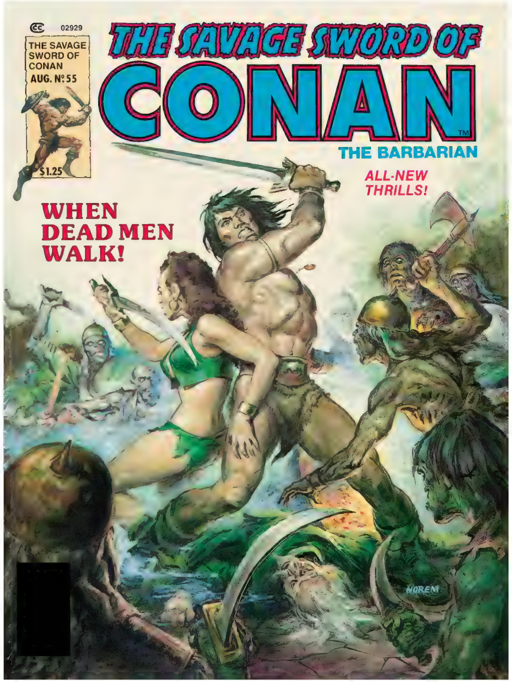
A youthful Conan wanders the streets of Zamora, reminiscing of recent adventures—all milestone events in Conan storytelling—in Thomas and Buscema's adaptation of Andrew J. Offutt's 1979 novel *The Sword of Skelos.* Within six months, Roy Thomas would go freelance, departing from Marvel and the editor's role on the character he helped turn into one of the biggest franchises in comics in the '70s and early '80s.



OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 56.
Pinup. Gene Day. September 1980.

Canadian artist Gene Day's star shined brightly at Marvel on titles like *Master of Kung Fu* and *Star Wars* before his untimely passing in 1982. His work on *Savage Sword* was a highlight despite being largely limited to non-Conan backup stories, pinups and some spot illustrations for text pieces.

RIGHT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 55.
Cover. Earl Norem. June 1980.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THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN
AUG. Nº 55
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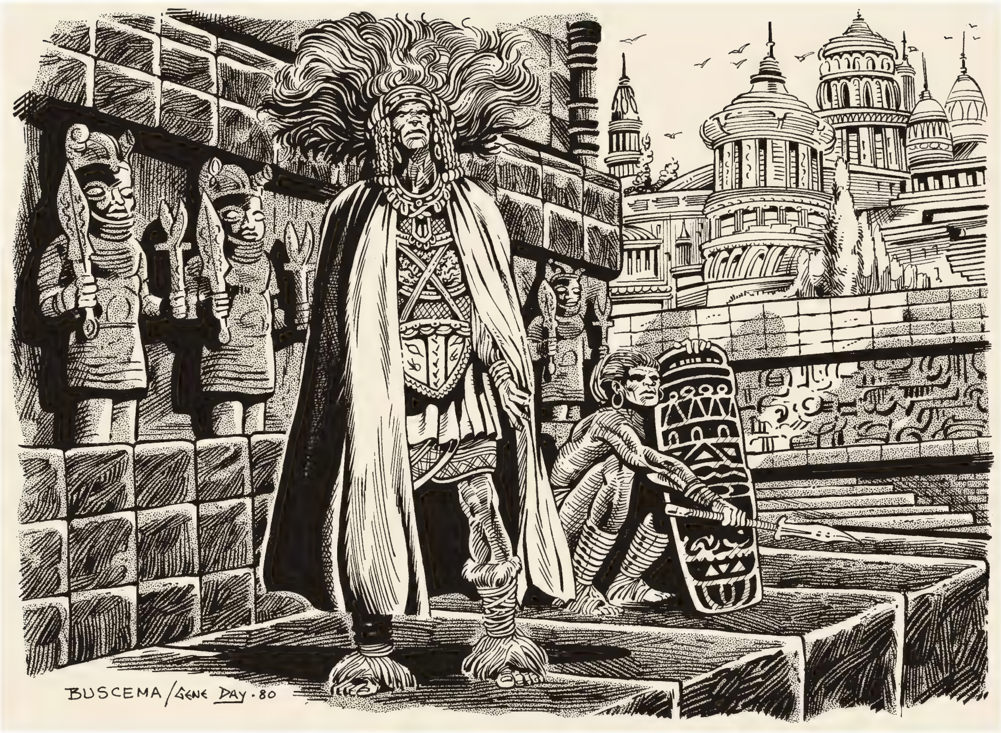
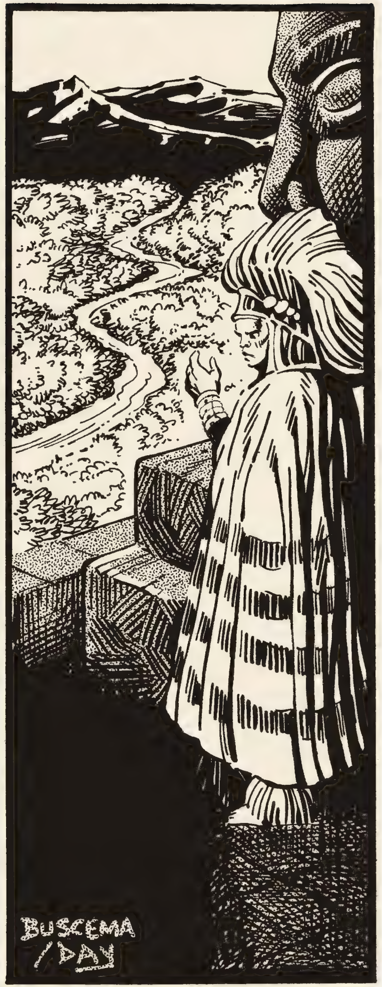
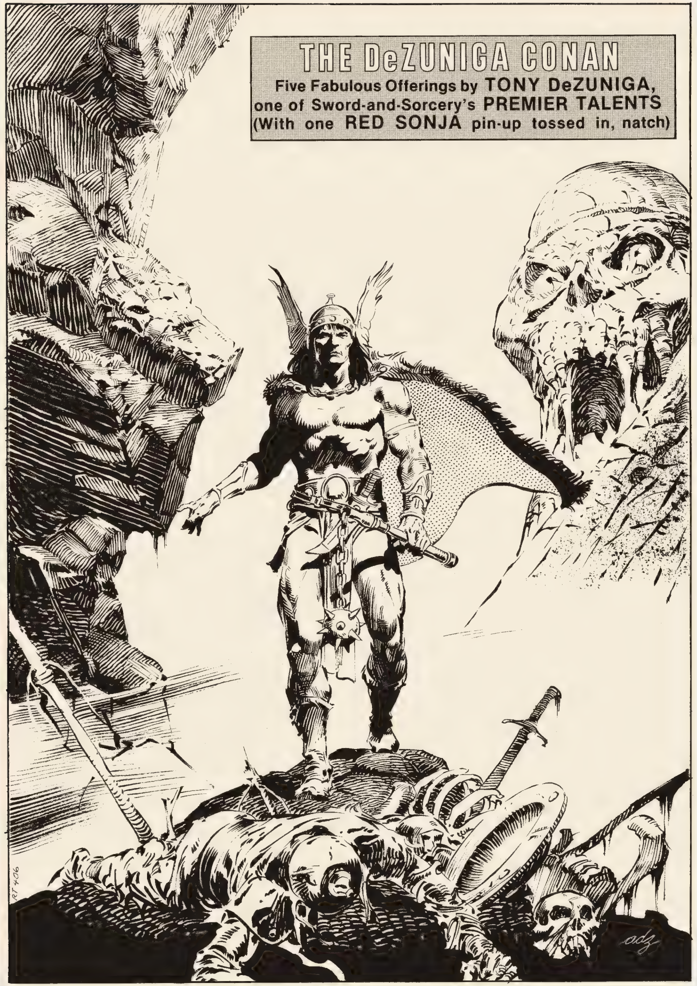
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF
CONAN
TM
THE BARBARIAN
ALL-NEW THRILLS!
WHEN DEAD MEN WALK!
NOREM

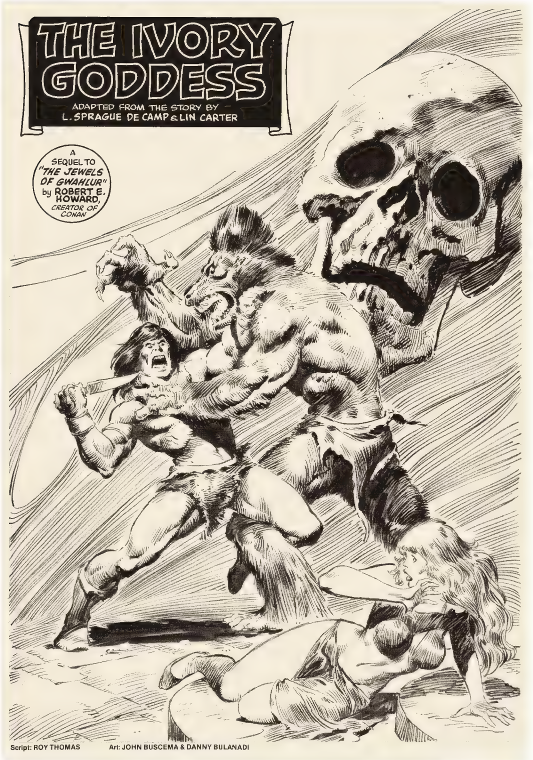
BELOW AND OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 56. Text piece illustrations. Pencils, John Buscema; inks, Gene Day. September 1980.

Day inked a handful of pieces for John Buscema that filled out an article by Charles R. Saunders on the mythology of the fictional Africa of Robert E. Howard.



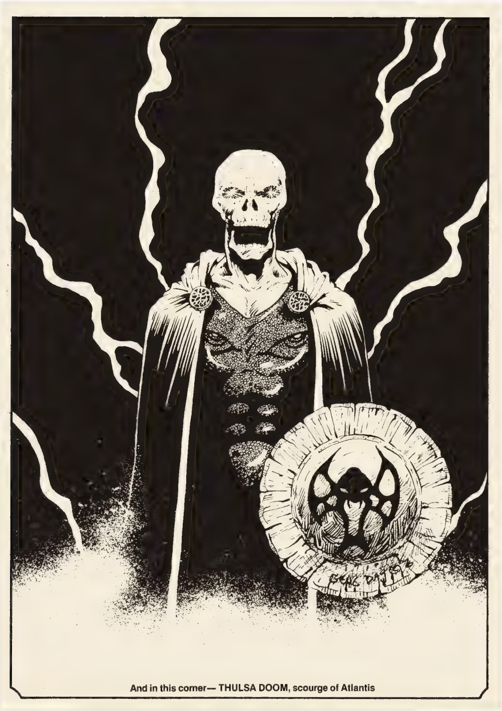



THE DeZUNIGA CONAN
Five Fabulous Offerings by TONY DeZUNIGA, one of Sword-and-Sorcery's PREMIER TALENTS (With one RED SONJA pin-up tossed in, natch)
RT-06
adz


THE IVORY GODDESS
ADAPTED FROM THE STORY BY L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP & LIN CARTER
A SEQUEL TO "THE JEWELS OF GWAHLUR" by ROBERT E. HOWARD, CREATOR OF CONAN
Script: ROY THOMAS
Art: JOHN BUSCEMA & DANNY BULANADI

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 56. Pinup. Tony DeZuniga. September 1980.

ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 60. Interior art, "The Ivory Goddess." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Danny Bulanadi. January 1981.

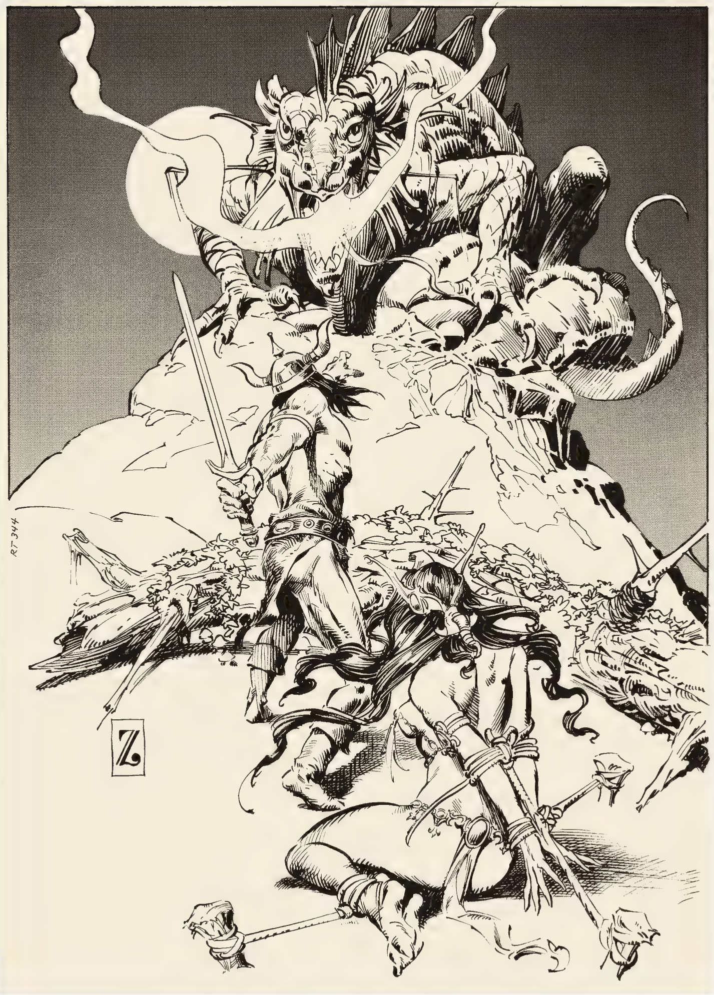

And in this corner— THULSA DOOM, scourge of Atlantis
GENE DAY

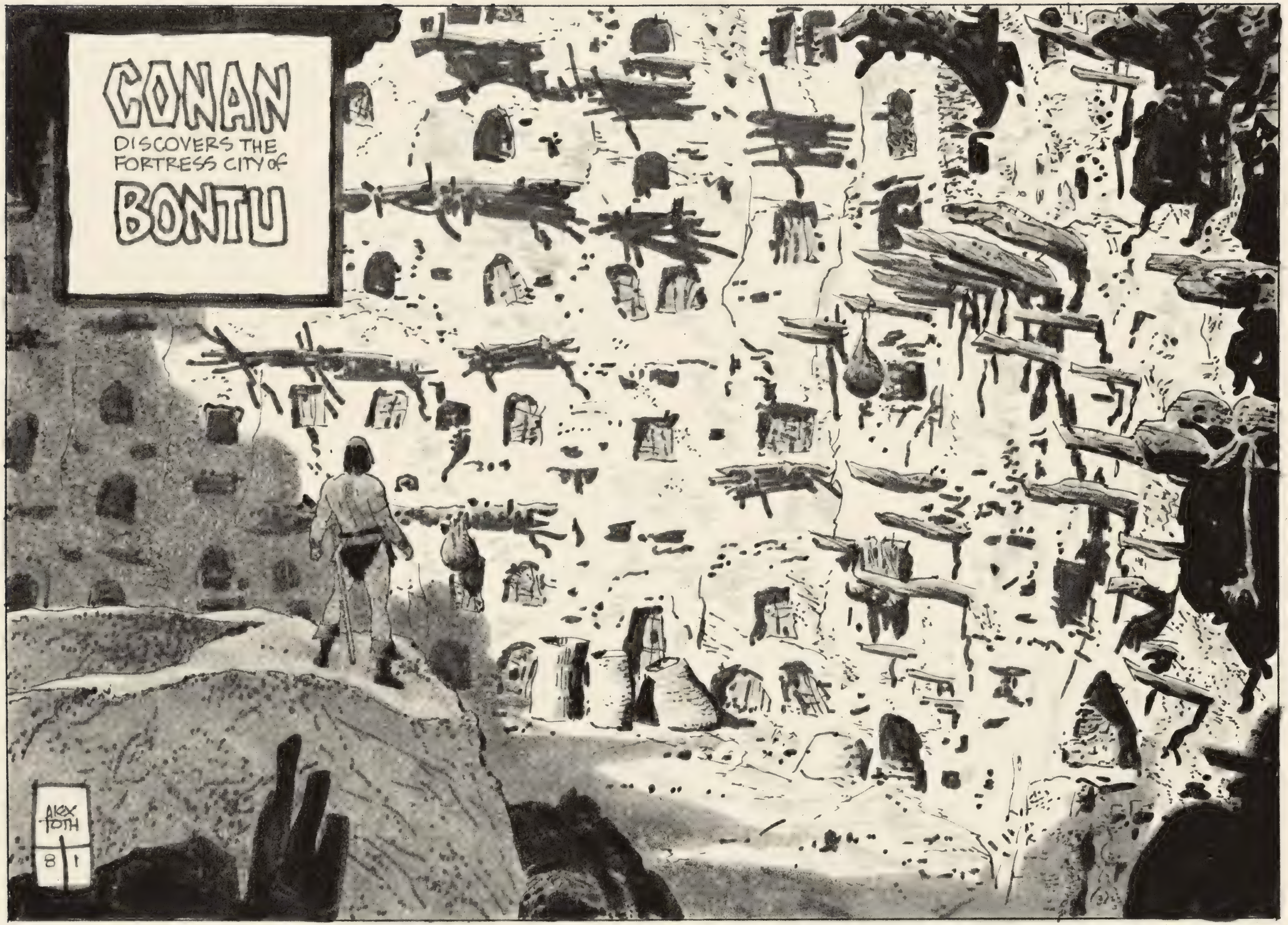
OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 56. Pinup.
Tony DeZuniga. September 1980.

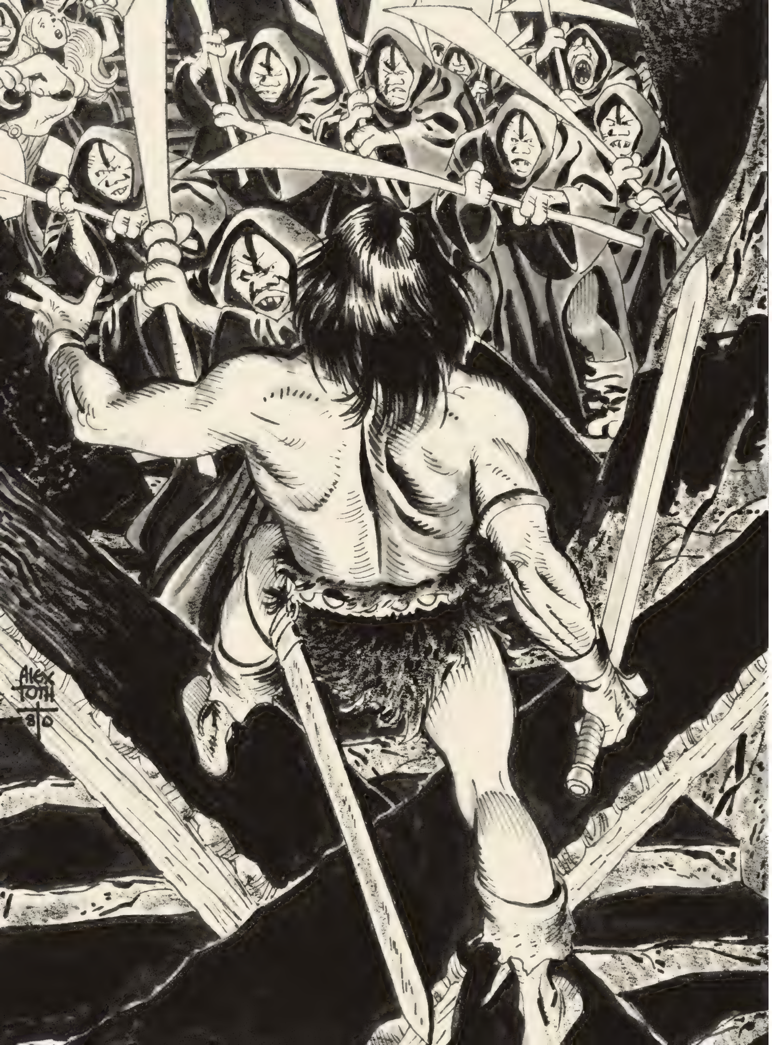
PAGES 134-135
Savage Sword of Conan No. 84. Pinup.
Alex Toth. January 1983.

ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 61. Pinup. Gene Day. February 1980.

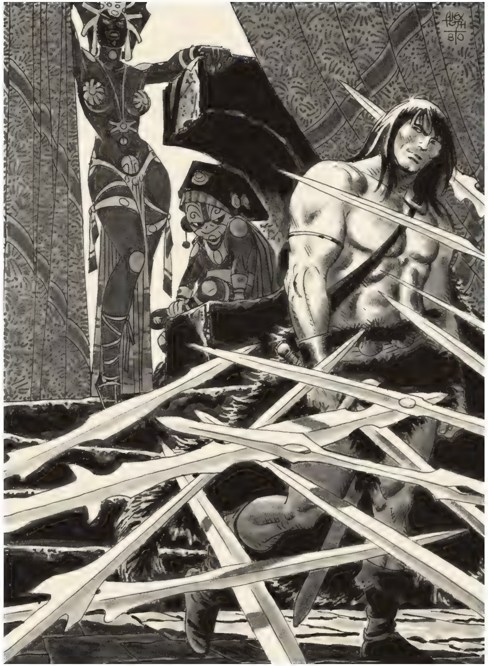
The skull-visaged necromancer Thulsa Doom originally started out as an antagonist for another Howard creation, Kull, before he made his way into the Conan mythos. An adaptation of the character, portrayed by James Earl Jones, was the feature antagonist in the *Conan the Barbarian* film, which made a huge impression at the box office in 1982. Gene Day summoned his fearsome form in a 1980 pinup.




CONAN
DISCOVERS THE
FORTRESS CITY OF
BONTU
ALEX TOTH
8 1

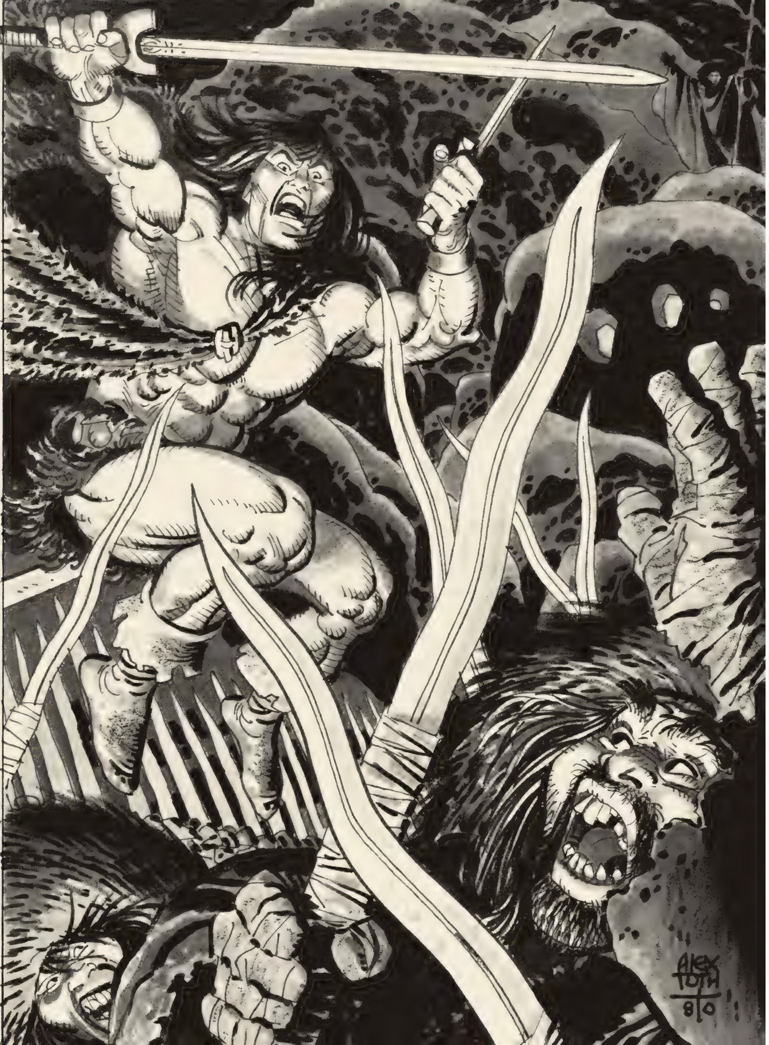


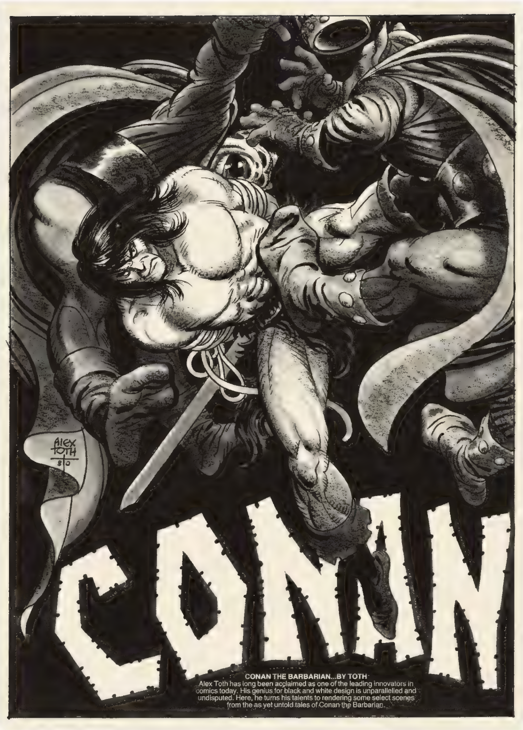
OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 63. Pinup. Alex Toth. April 1981.



ABOVE AND PAGES 138-141
Savage Sword of Conan No. 64. Pinups. Alex Toth. May 1981.

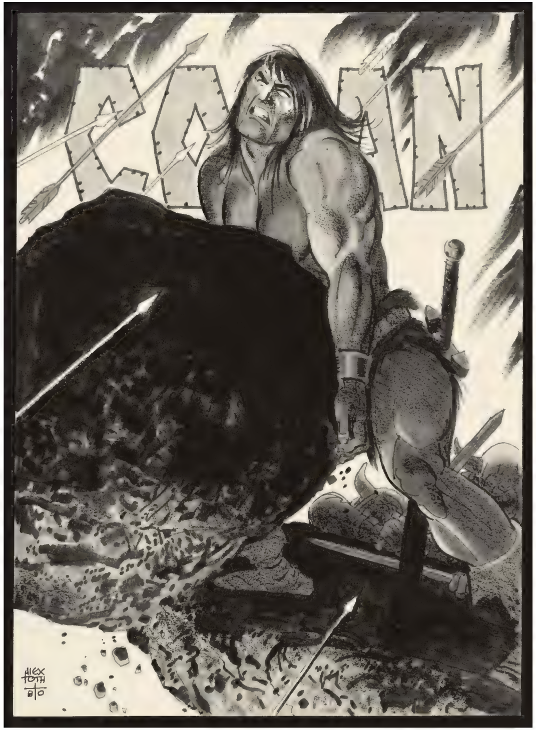
With just one artist portfolio, Alex Toth broadened the possibilities of Conan art to an immense degree with his idiosyncratic and sometimes abstract take on the barbarian. The legendary cartoonist got his start in the post-WWII comics scene with DC, moved into comic strips and eventually joined the Hanna-Barbera studios to usher in a timeless run of animated cartoons, including his creation, *Space Ghost*. With subject matter interests that ranged from hot rod racers to horror to everything in between, Toth was a natural to illustrate a series of pinups, leaving behind a unique legacy in Conan art.

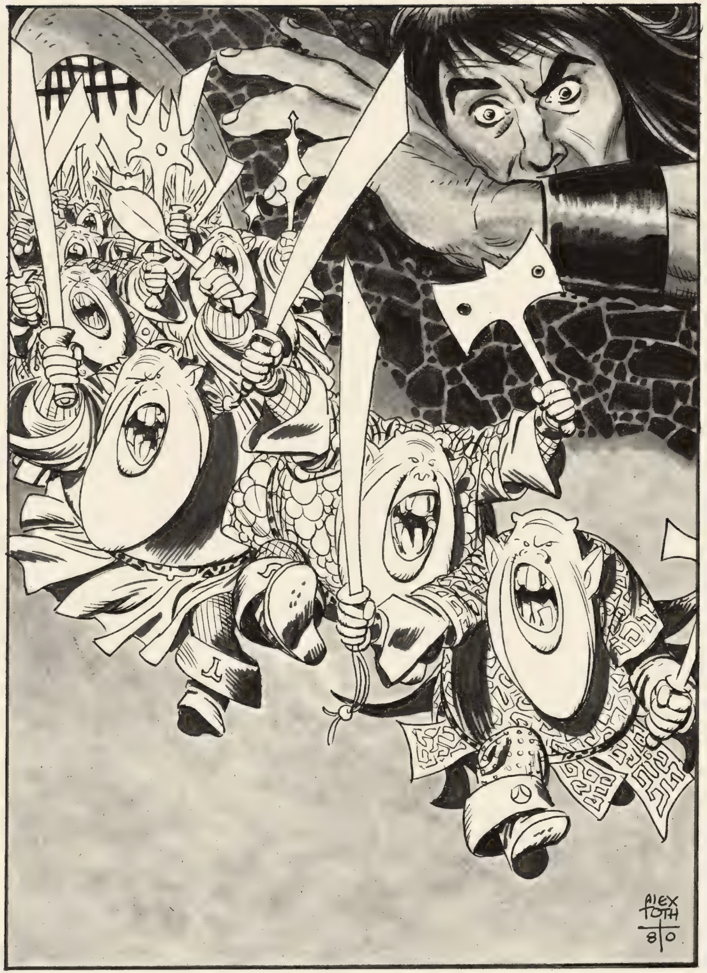


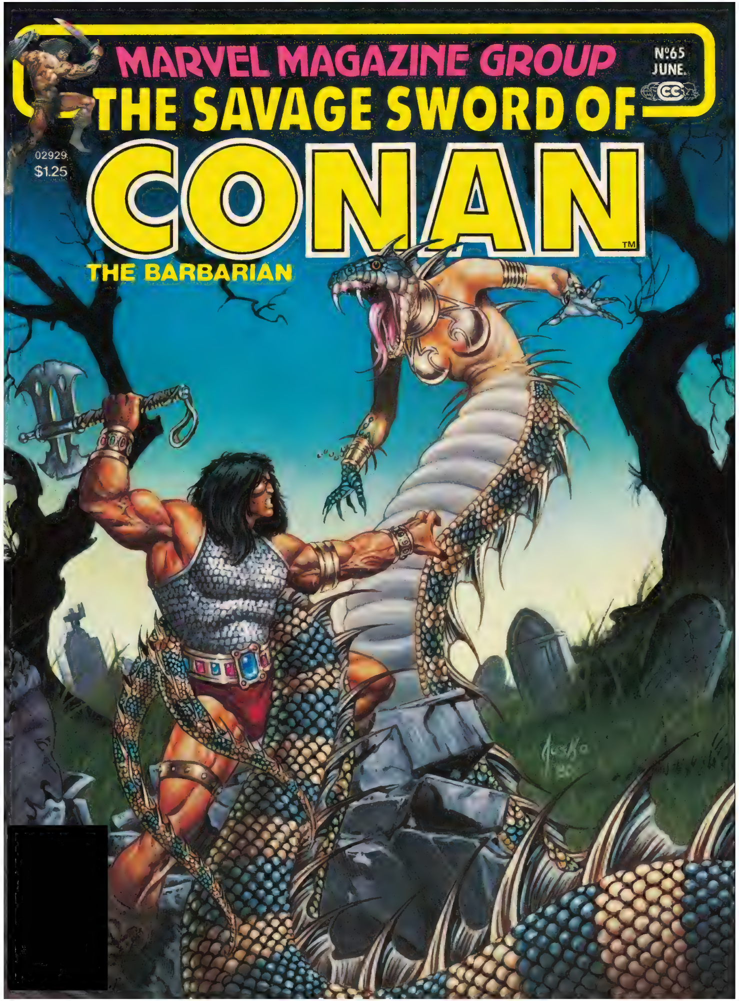


CONAN THE BARBARIAN...BY TOTH

Alex Toth has long been acclaimed as one of the leading innovators in comics today. His genius for black and white design is unparallelled and undisputed. Here, he turns his talents to rendering some select scenes from the as yet untold tales of Conan the Barbarian.

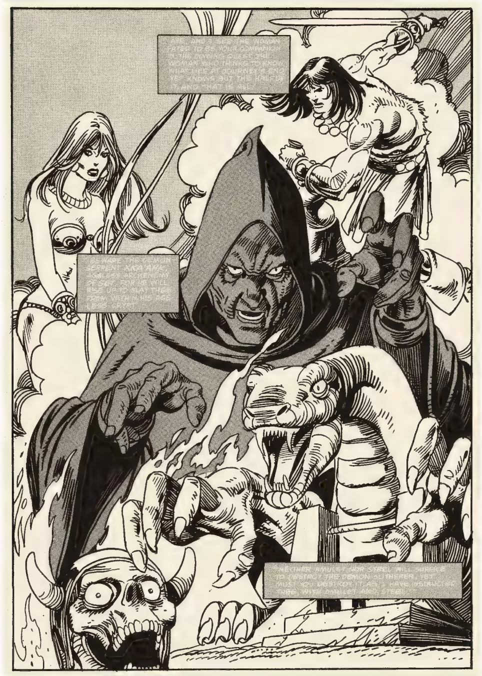

CONAN
ALEX TOTH
80


ALEX TOTH
80



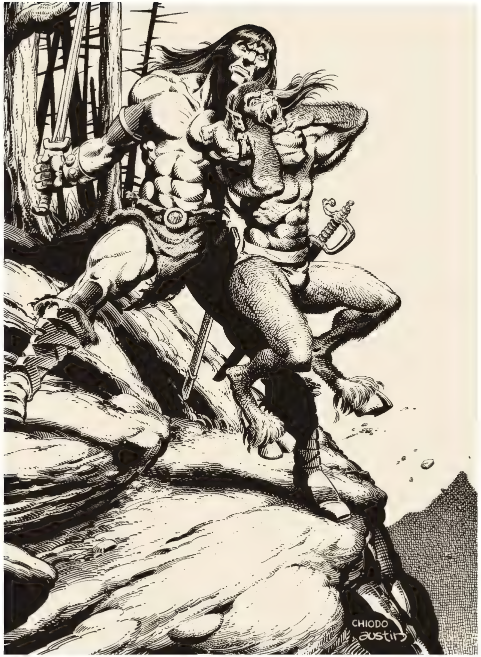
OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 65. Cover. Joe Jusko. June 1981.

Joe Jusko didn't start painting *Savage Sword* covers until 1981, but he made up for lost time by painting an astonishing 34 covers through 1992. The rich, contemporary palette Jusko brought to his work percolated to other cover subjects throughout Marvel, and by the end of his time with the company, he had depicted virtually every character in their stable on magazine covers, pinups, posters and trading cards.



ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 65. Interior art, "The Fangs of the Serpent!" Script, Michael Fleisher; pencils and inks, Gil Kane. June 1981.

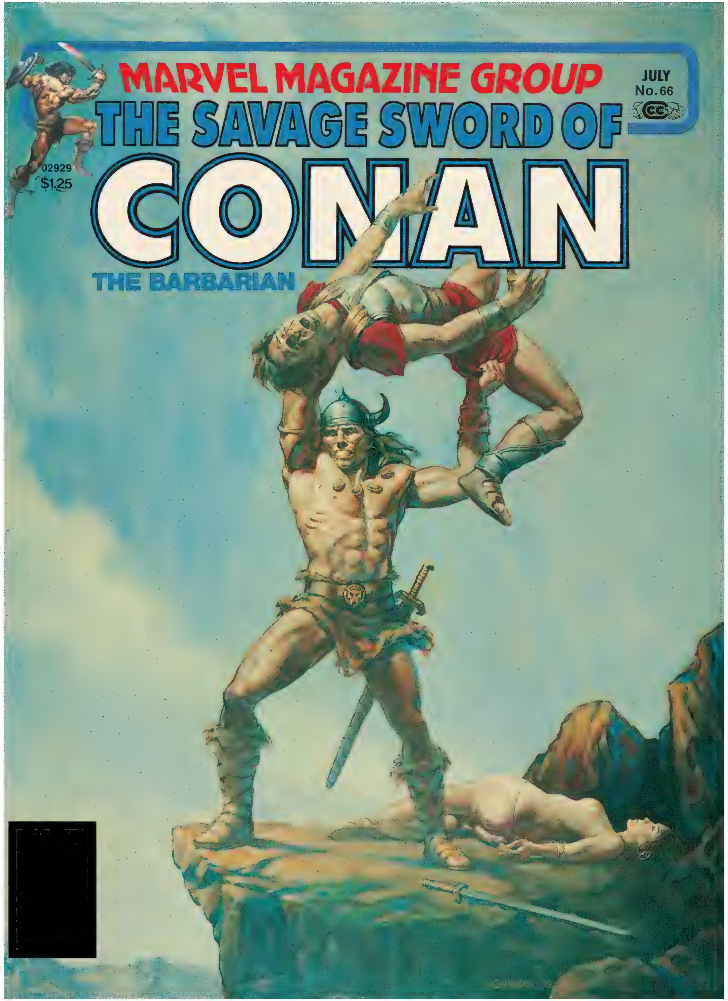
After several years away from Conan, Gil Kane returned for a brief burst of activity in the early '80s, becoming a regular artist of the color comic for a short time and drawing pinups and stories in *Savage Sword*.


CHIODO
austin

ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 65. Pinup. Pencils, Joe Chiodo; inks, Terry Austin. June 1981.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 66. Cover. Joe Chiodo. July 1981.

Another prolific '80s *Savage Sword* cover artist named "Joe" was Joe Chiodo, who would paint ten covers in the decade, as well as the requisite pinups.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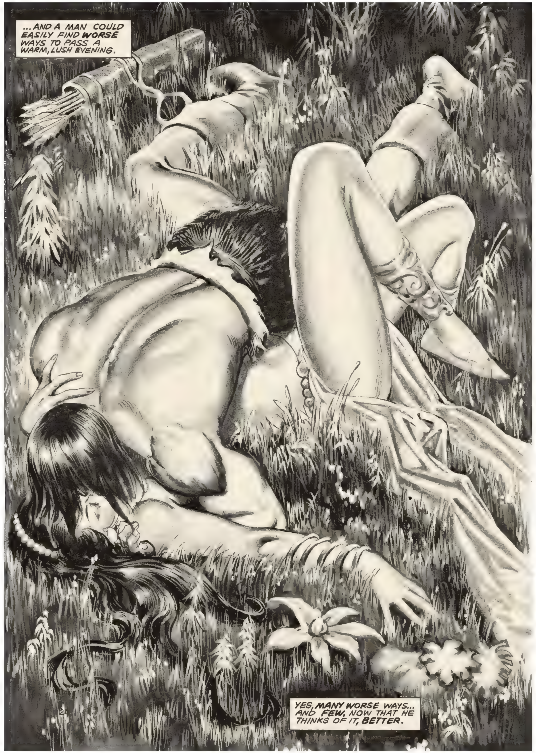
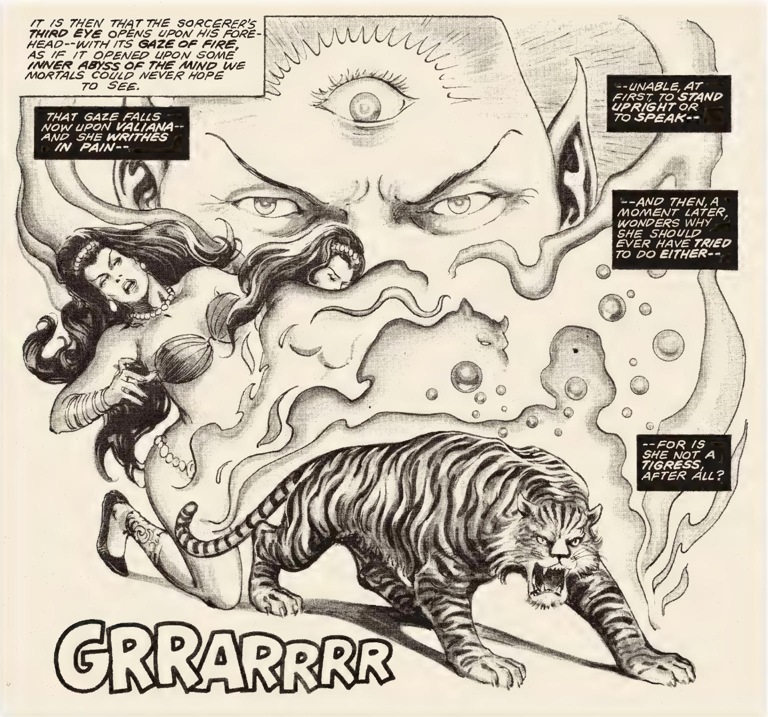
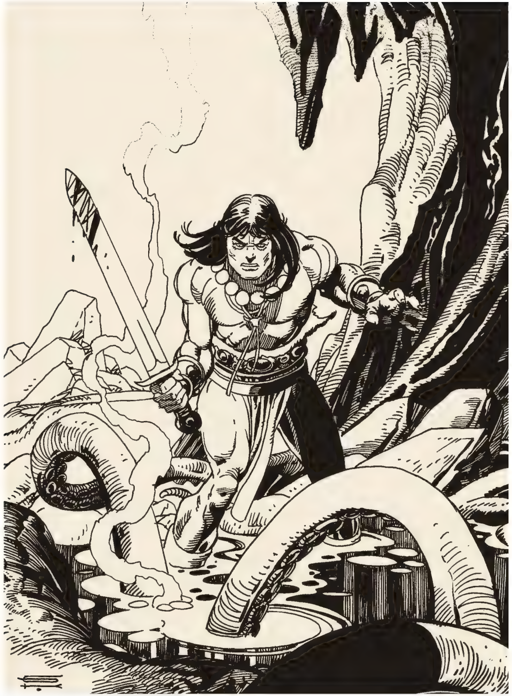
OPPOSITE AND BELOW
Savage Sword of Conan No. 69. Interior art, "Eye of the Sorcerer."
Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, Ernie Chan; inks, Alfredo Alcala. June 1981.


...AND A MAN COULD EASILY FIND WORSE WAYS TO PASS A WARM, LUSH EVENING.
YES, MANY WORSE WAYS... AND FEW, NOW THAT HE THINKS OF IT, BETTER.

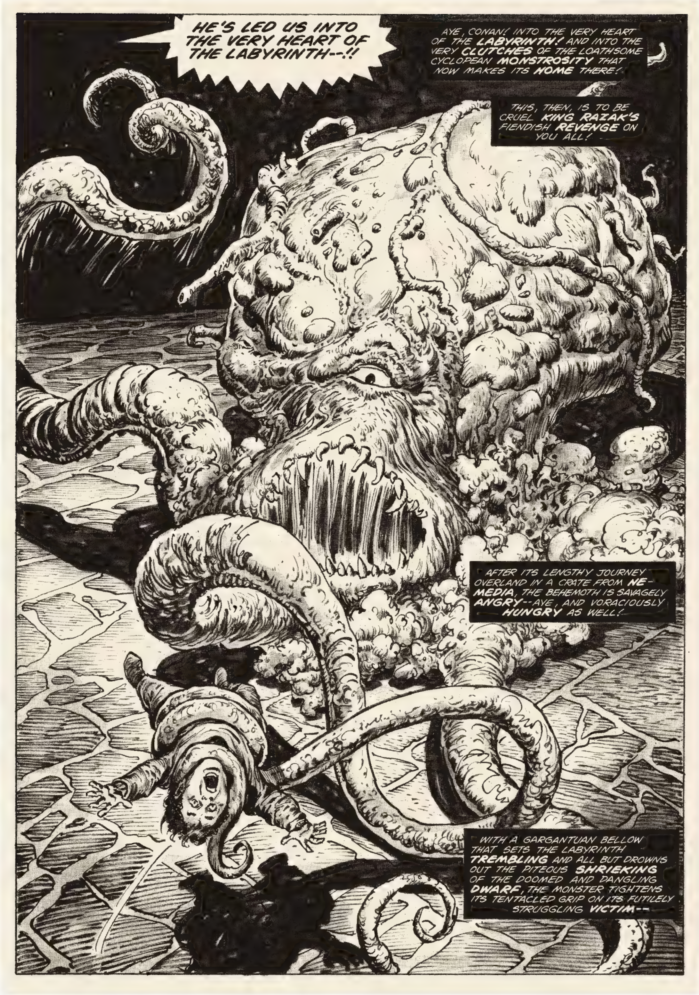

IT IS THEN THAT THE SORCERER'S THIRD EYE OPENS UPON HIS FOREHEAD--WITH ITS GAZE OF FIRE, AS IF IT OPENED UPON SOME INNER ABYSS OF THE MIND WE MORTALS COULD NEVER HOPE TO SEE.
THAT GAZE FALLS NOW UPON VALIANA-- AND SHE WRITHES IN PAIN--
--UNABLE, AT FIRST, TO STAND UPRIGHT OR TO SPEAK--
--AND THEN, A MOMENT LATER, WONDERS WHY SHE SHOULD EVER HAVE TRIED TO DO EITHER--
--FOR IS SHE NOT A TIGRESS, AFTER ALL?
GRRARRRR

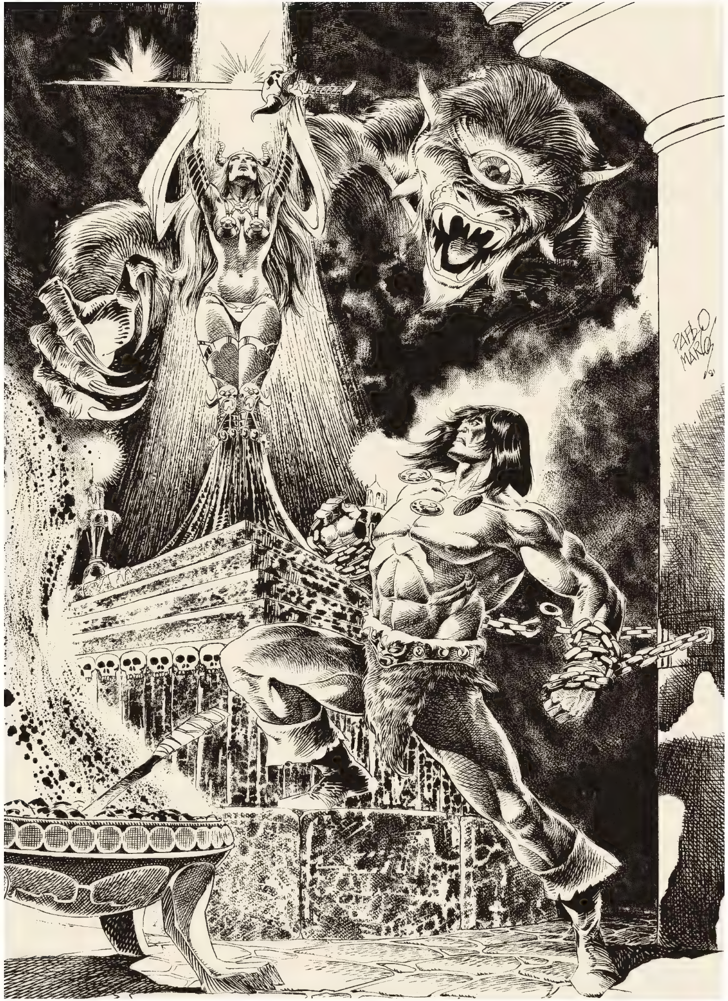


ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 70. Pinup. Gil Kane. November 1981.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 71. Interior art, “The Lurker in the Labyrinth.” Script, Michael Fleisher; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Ernie Chan. December 1981.

New writers across the Conan family of titles shook things up, turning away from Roy Thomas’ habit of adapting past Conan tales by Howard and other authors and telling an ongoing string of all-new stories. In collaboration with longtime pencil/inks duo Buscema and Chan, new *Savage Sword* scribe Michael Fleisher could develop a horrific-looking monster with the best of them.

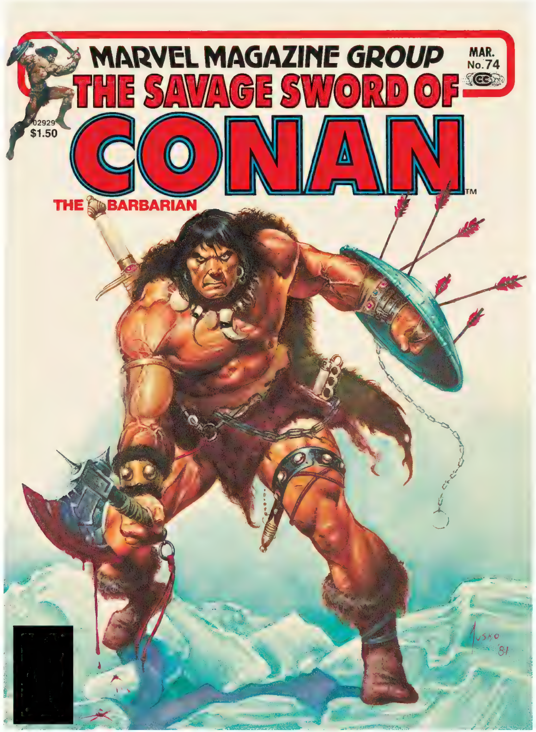

HE'S LED US INTO THE VERY HEART OF THE LABYRINTH--!!
AYE, CONAN! INTO THE VERY HEART OF THE LABYRINTH! AND INTO THE VERY CLUTCHES OF THE LOATHSOME CYCLOPEAN MONSTROSITY THAT NOW MAKES ITS HOME THERE!
THIS, THEN, IS TO BE CRUEL KING RAZAK'S FIENDISH REVENGE ON YOU ALL!
AFTER ITS LENGTHY JOURNEY OVERLAND IN A CRATE FROM NEMEDIA, THE BEHEMOTH IS SAVAGELY ANGRY--AYE, AND VORACIOUSLY HUNGRY AS WELL!
WITH A GARGANTUAN BELLOW THAT SETS THE LABYRINTH TREMBLING AND ALL BUT DROWNS OUT THE PITEOUS SHRIEKING OF THE DOOMED AND DANGLING DWARF, THE MONSTER TIGHTENS ITS TENTACLED GRIP ON ITS FUTILELY STRUGGLING VICTIM--


PABLO MARCOS '81

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 73. Pinup. Pablo Marcos. February 1982.

Another of Buscema's long line of Conan inkers, Peruvian-born Pablo Marcos, illustrated several pinups for *Savage Sword* where his naturalistic style was able to shine. Marcos also had a gift for the macabre, drawing nearly the full run of Simon Garth stories in the black-and-white magazine *Tales of the Zombie*.

BELOW
Savage Sword of Conan No. 74. Cover. Joe Jusko. March 1982.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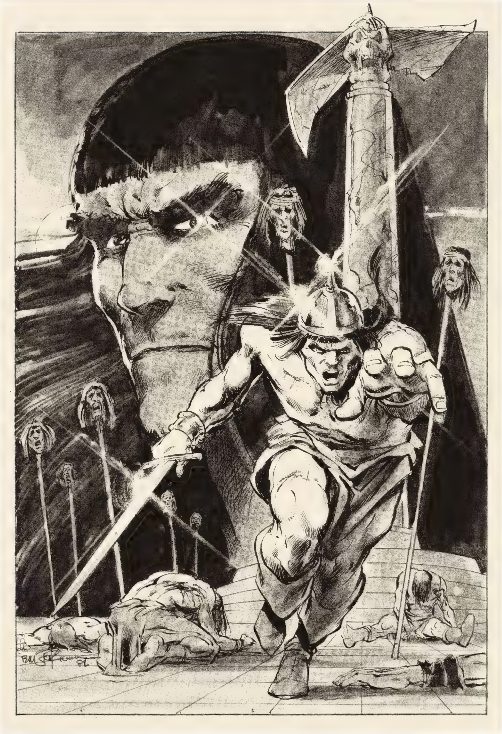
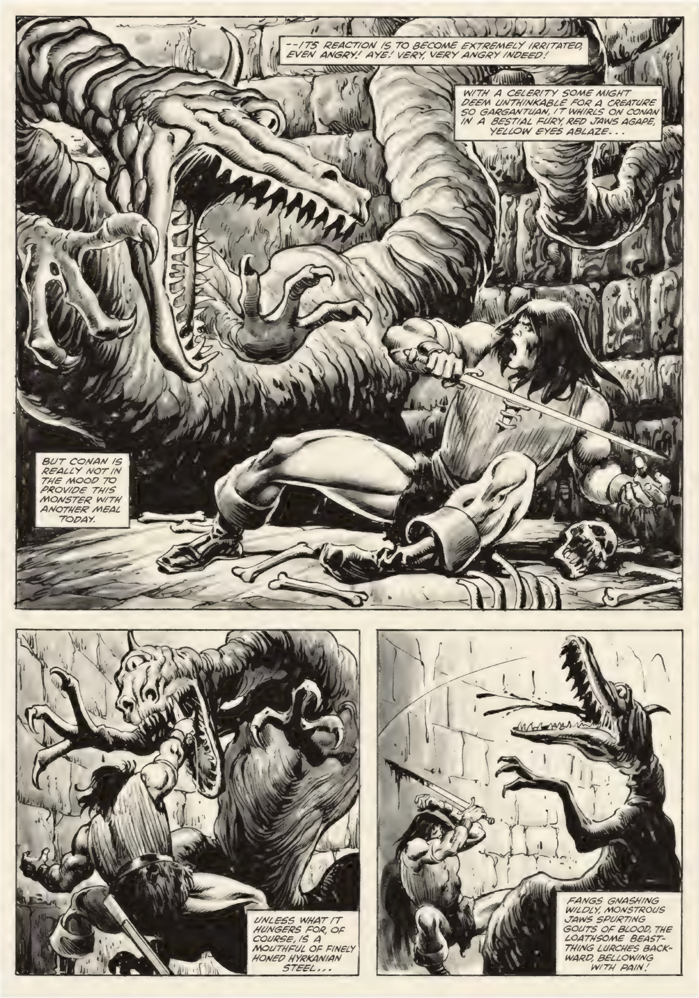
Jusko '81

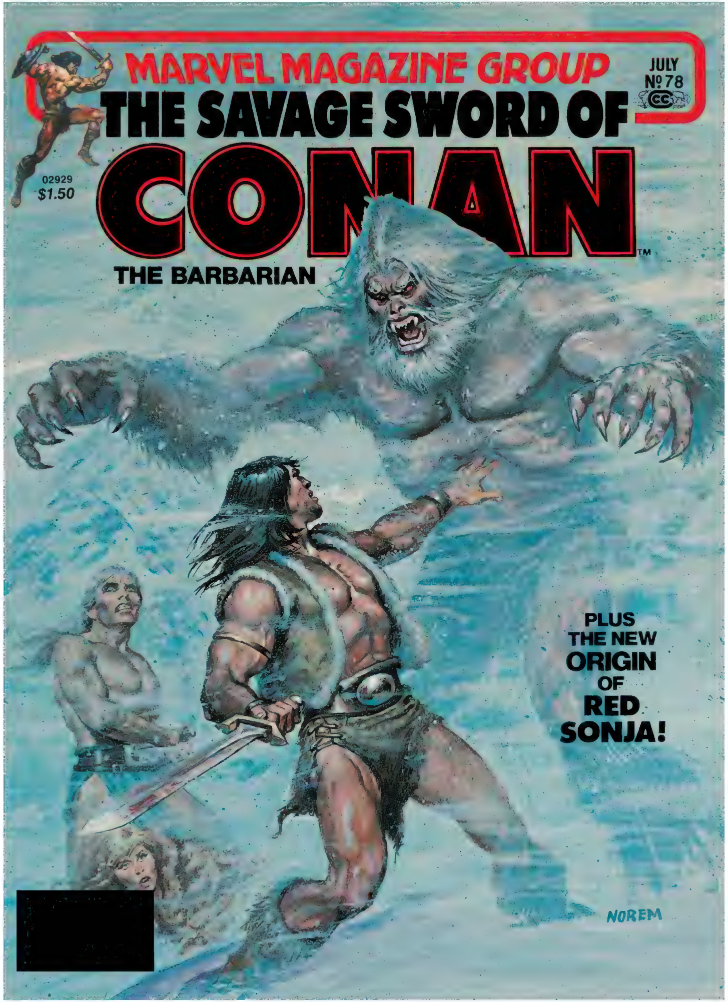


OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 76.
Interior art, "Dominion of the Bat!"
Script, Michael Fleisher; pencils,
John Buscema; inks, Alfredo Alcala,
Joe Chiodo, Ricardo Villamonte.
May 1982.

ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 76. Pinup. Bill Sienkiewicz. May 1982.

Bill Sienkiewicz was on a rapid ascent to renown as one of comics' most innovative stylists when he illustrated a series of pinups and covers for the Conan family of titles. His first pinup indicated the Neal Adams influence that had informed his earliest work on *Moon Knight*.


--ITS REACTION IS TO BECOME EXTREMELY IRRITATED, EVEN ANGRY! AYE! VERY, VERY ANGRY INDEED!
WITH A CELERITY SOME MIGHT DEEM UNTHINKABLE FOR A CREATURE SO GARGANTUAN, IT WHIRLS ON CONAN IN A BESTIAL FURY, RED JAWS AGAPE, YELLOW EYES ABLAZE...
BUT CONAN IS REALLY NOT IN THE MOOD TO PROVIDE THIS MONSTER WITH ANOTHER MEAL TODAY.
UNLESS WHAT IT HUNGERS FOR, OF COURSE, IS A MOUTHFUL OF FINELY HONED HYRKANIAN STEEL...
FANGS GNASHING WILDLY, MONSTROUS JAWS SPURTING GOUTS OF BLOOD, THE LOATHSOME BEAST-THING LURCHES BACKWARD, BELLOWING WITH PAIN!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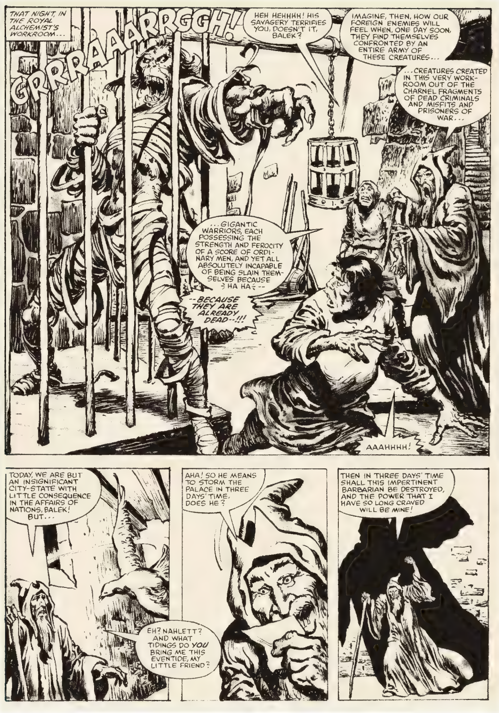
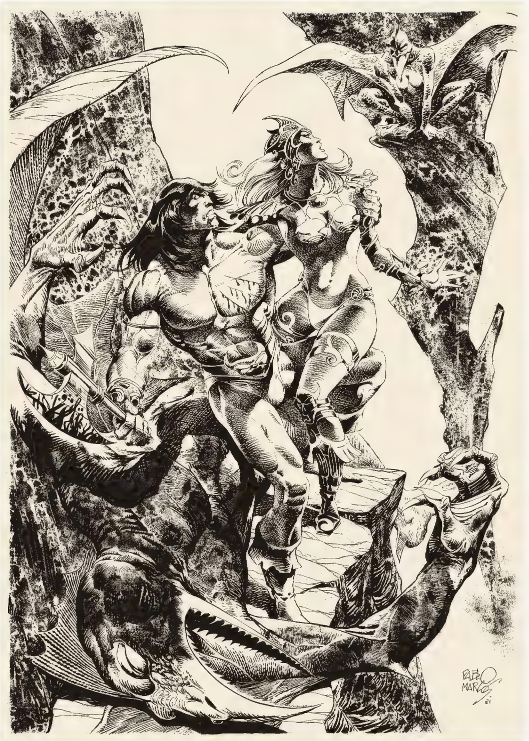
PLUS THE NEW ORIGIN OF RED SONJA!
NOREM

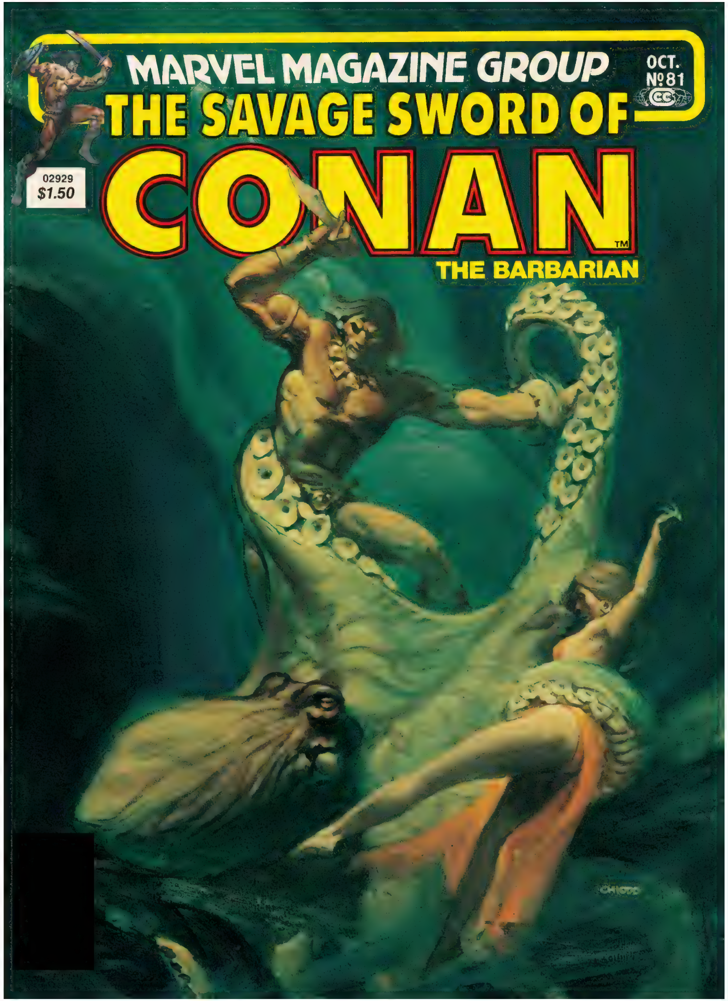
OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 78. Cover. Earl Norem. July 1982.


THAT NIGHT, IN THE ROYAL ALCHEMIST'S WORKROOM...
GRRRAAAARRGGH!
HEH HEHHHH! HIS SAVAGERY TERRIFIES YOU, DOESN'T IT, BALEK?
IMAGINE, THEN, HOW OUR FOREIGN ENEMIES WILL FEEL WHEN, ONE DAY SOON, THEY FIND THEMSELVES CONFRONTED BY AN ENTIRE ARMY OF THESE CREATURES...
...CREATURES CREATED IN THIS VERY WORKROOM OUT OF THE CHARNEL FRAGMENTS OF DEAD CRIMINALS AND MISFITS AND PRISONERS OF WAR...
...GIGANTIC WARRIORS, EACH POSSESSING THE STRENGTH AND FEROCITY OF A SCORE OF ORDINARY MEN, AND YET ALL ABSOLUTELY INCAPABLE OF BEING SLAIN THEMSELVES BECAUSE HA HA --
--BECAUSE THEY ARE ALREADY DEAD--!!!
AAAHHHH!
TODAY, WE ARE BUT AN INSIGNIFICANT CITY-STATE WITH LITTLE CONSEQUENCE IN THE AFFAIRS OF NATIONS, BALEK! BUT...
EH? NAHLETT? AND WHAT TIDINGS DO YOU BRING ME THIS EVENTIDE, MY LITTLE FRIEND?
AHA! SO HE MEANS TO STORM THE PALACE IN THREE DAYS' TIME, DOES HE?
THEN IN THREE DAYS' TIME SHALL THIS IMPERTINENT BARBARIAN BE DESTROYED, AND THE POWER THAT I HAVE SO LONG CRAVED WILL BE MINE!

ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 78. Interior art, "Demons of the Firelight!" Script, Michael Fleisher; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Ernie Chan. July 1982.

The artistic duo of Buscema and Chan conjured an undead creature reminiscent of Buscema's mid-'70s work on *Frankenstein*.

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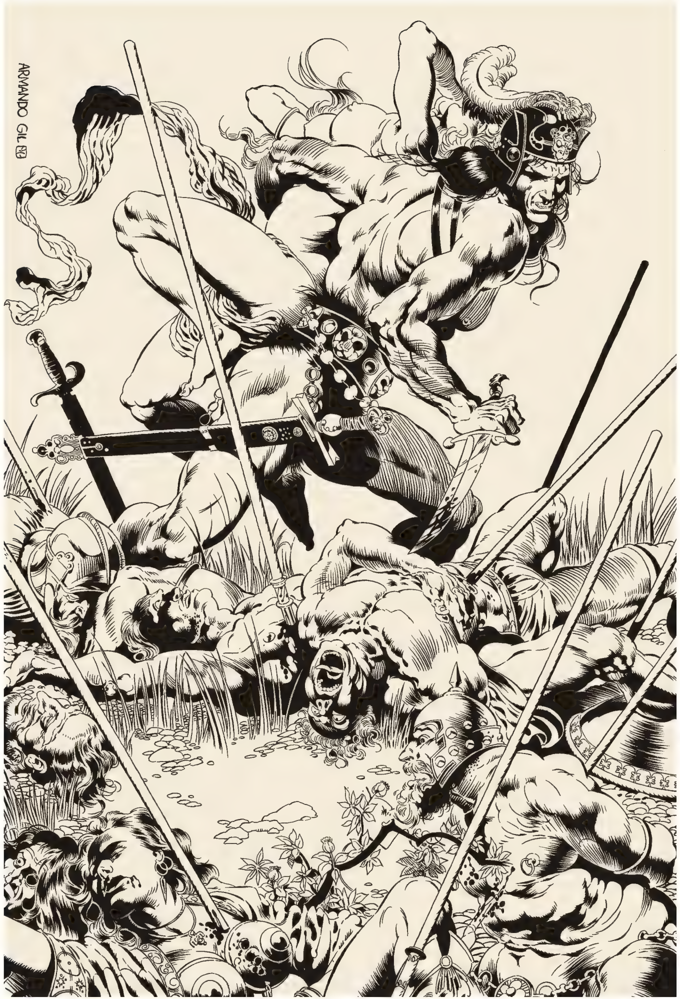
ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 85. Pinup. Pablo Marcos. February 1983.

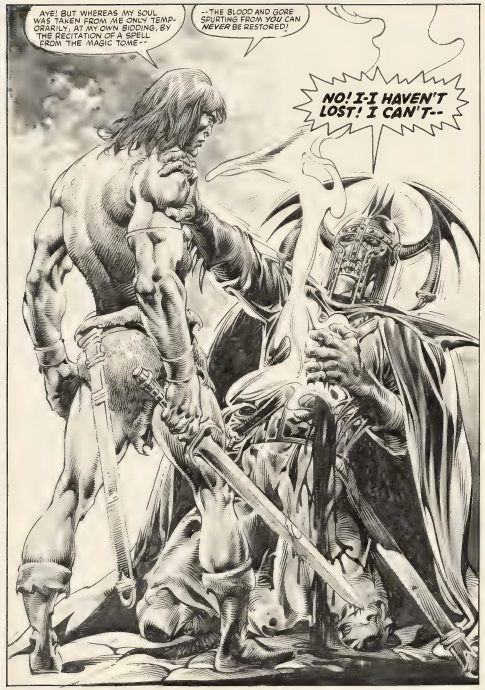
OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 81. Cover. Joe Chiodo. October 1982.

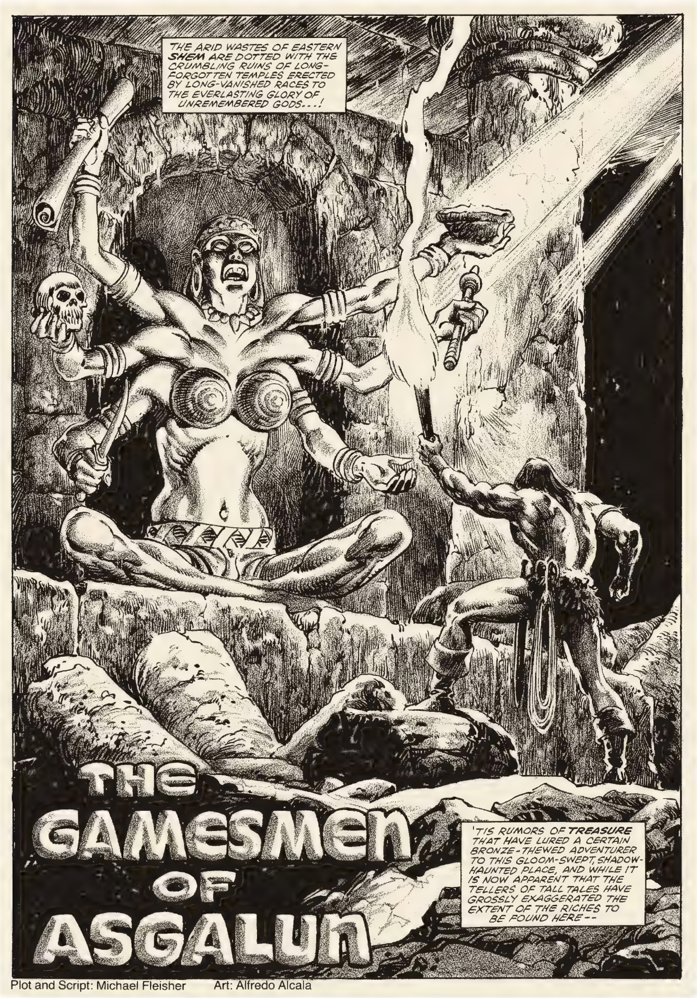

ARMANDO GIL

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 91. Pinup. Armando Gil. August 1983.

BELOW
Savage Sword of Conan No. 96. Interior art, "The Ape-Bat of Marmet Tarn." Script, Michael Fleisher; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Rudy Nebres. January 1984.

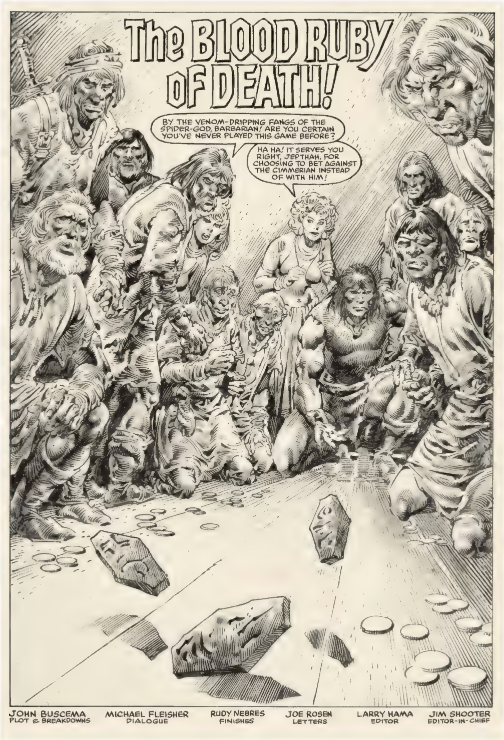
Wraarl, the Devourer of Souls, was one of the more popular new villains to menace Conan during the '80s. Created by Fleisher and Buscema in *Savage Sword*, the demon from another dimension would hound Conan across many stories in *Savage Sword* and the color title.


AYE! BUT WHEREAS MY SOUL WAS TAKEN FROM ME ONLY TEMPORARILY, AT MY OWN BIDDING, BY THE RECITATION OF A SPELL FROM THE MAGIC TOME--
--THE BLOOD AND GORE SPURTING FROM YOU CAN NEVER BE RESTORED!
NO! I-I HAVEN'T LOST! I CAN'T--

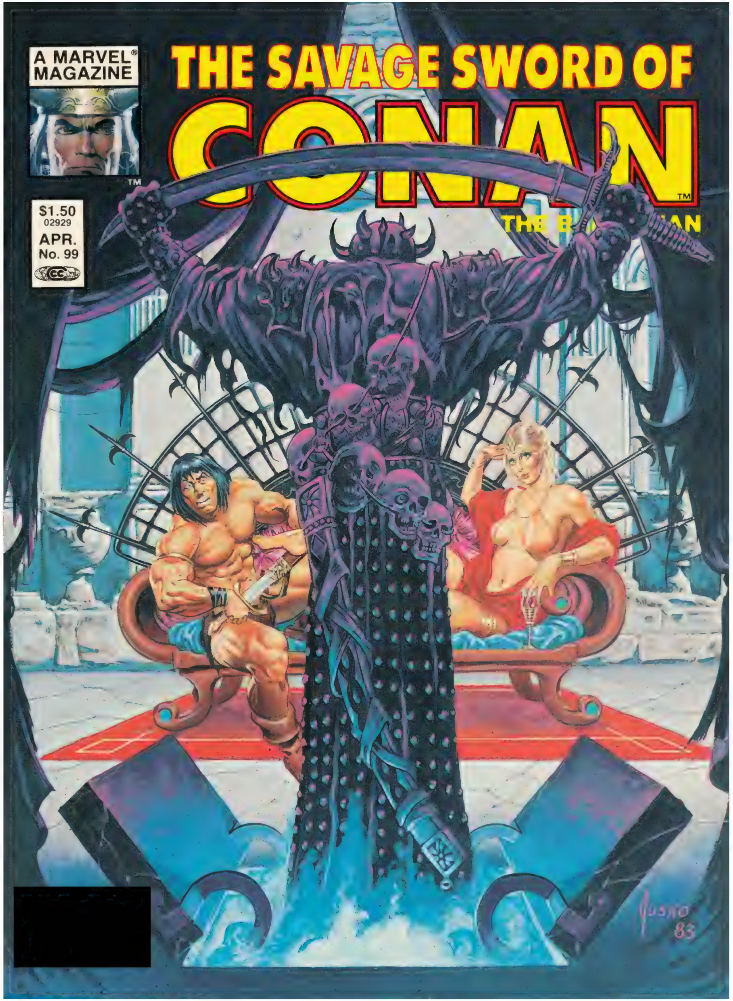

THE ARID WASTES OF EASTERN SHEM ARE DOTTED WITH THE CRUMBLING RUINS OF LONG-FORGOTTEN TEMPLES ERECTED BY LONG-VANISHED RACES TO THE EVERLASTING GLORY OF UNREMEMBERED GODS...!
THE GAMESMEN OF ASGALUN
'TIS RUMORS OF TREASURE THAT HAVE LURED A CERTAIN BRONZE-THEWED ADVENTURER TO THIS GLOOM-SWEPT, SHADOW-HAUNTED PLACE, AND WHILE IT IS NOW APPARENT THAT THE TELLERS OF TALL TALES HAVE GROSSLY EXAGGERATED THE EXTENT OF THE RICHES TO BE FOUND HERE--
Plot and Script: Michael Fleisher
Art: Alfredo Alcala

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 89. Interior art, "Gamesmen of Asgalun." Script, Michael Fleisher; pencils and inks, Alfredo Alcala. June 1983.

In the early '80s, *Savage Sword* readers were treated to a handful of stories penciled and inked by Alfredo Alcala, where the artist could most fully realize his singular style.


The BLOOD RUBY OF DEATH!
BY THE VENOM-DRIPPING FANGS OF THE SPIDER-GOD, BARBARIAN! ARE YOU CERTAIN YOU'VE NEVER PLAYED THIS GAME BEFORE?
HA HA! IT SERVES YOU RIGHT, JEPTHAH, FOR CHOOSING TO BET AGAINST THE CIMMERIAN INSTEAD OF WITH HIM!
JOHN BUSCEMA PLOT & BREAKDOWNS
MICHAEL FLEISHER DIALOGUE
RUDY NEBRES FINISHES
JOE ROSEN LETTERS
LARRY HAMA EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 98. Interior art, "The Blood Ruby of Death!" Plot and pencils, John Buscema; script, Michael Fleisher; inks, Rudy Nebres. March 1984.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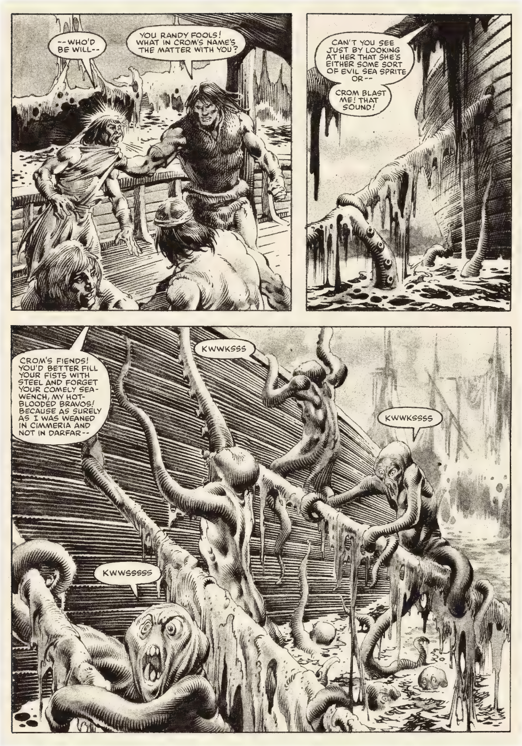

--WHO'D BE WILL--
YOU RANDY FOOLS! WHAT IN CROM'S NAME'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?
CAN'T YOU SEE JUST BY LOOKING AT HER THAT SHE'S EITHER SOME SORT OF EVIL SEA SPRITE OR--
CROM BLAST ME! THAT SOUND!
CROM'S FIENDS! YOU'D BETTER FILL YOUR FISTS WITH STEEL AND FORGET YOUR COMELY SEA-WENCH, MY HOT-BLOODED BRAVOS! BECAUSE AS SURELY AS I WAS WEANED IN CIMMERIA AND NOT IN DARFAR--
KWWKSSS
KWWKSSSS
KWWSSSSS

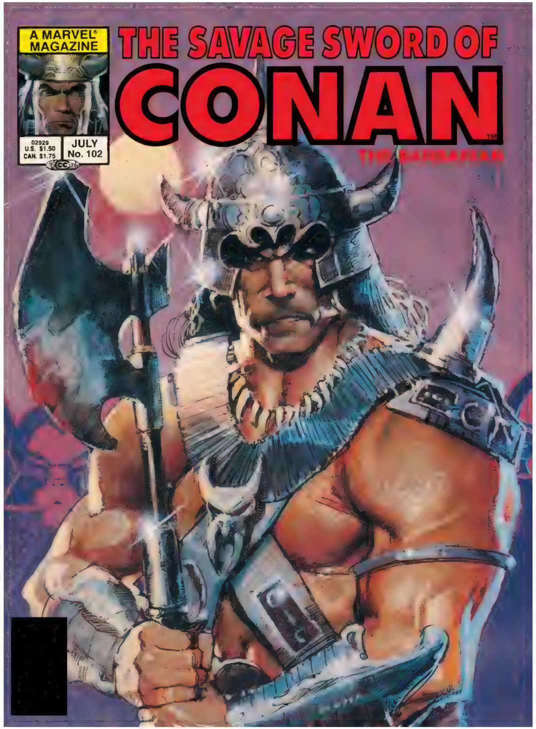
OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 99. Cover. Joe Jusko. April 1984.

ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 101. Interior art, “The Siren.” Plot and pencils, John Buscema; script, Michael Fleisher; inks, Rudy Nebres. June 1984.

BELOW
Savage Sword of Conan No. 102. Cover. Bill Sienkiewicz. July 1984.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 102. Interior art, "The Iron Lions of the Kharamun." Script, Michael Fleisher; pencils, Gary Kwapisz; inks, Ernie Chan. July 1984.

PAGES 166-167
Savage Sword of Conan No. 107. Pinup. Rudy Nebres. December 1984.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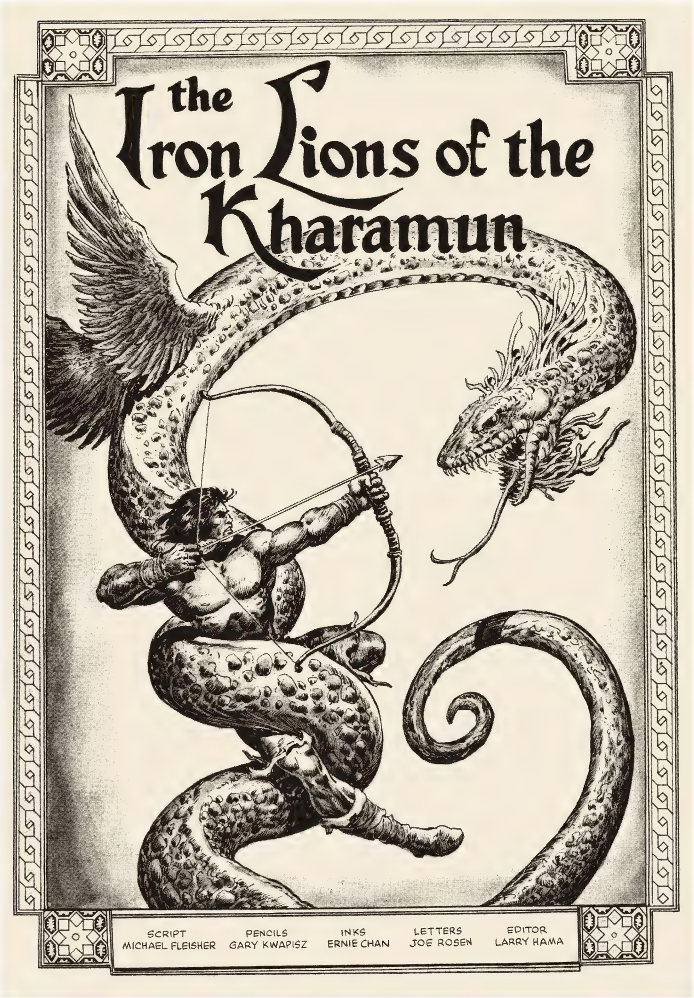
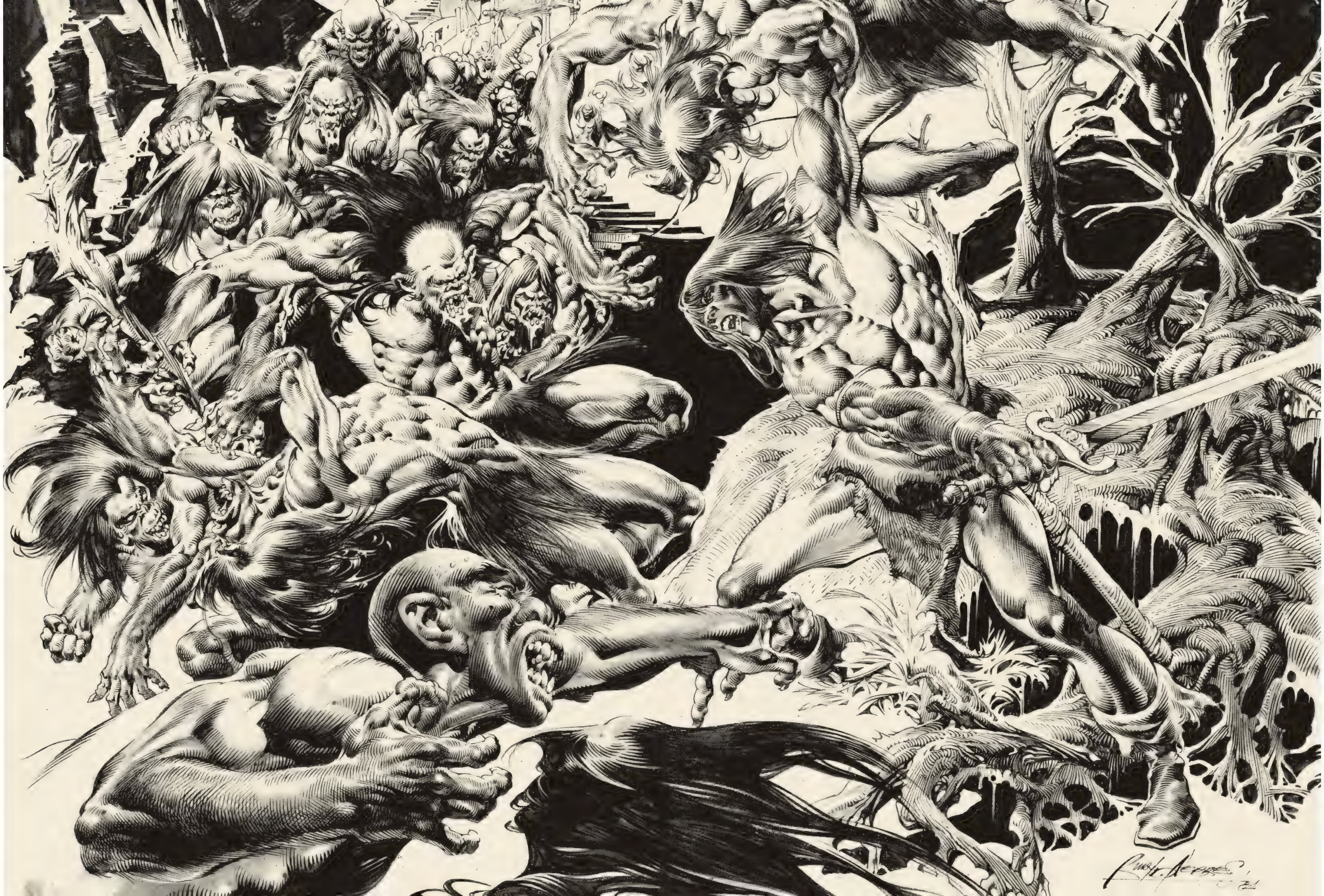
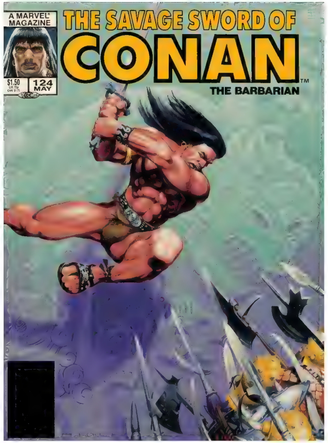

the Iron Lions of the Kharamun
SCRIPT MICHAEL FLEISHER
PENCILS GARY KWAPISZ
INKS ERNIE CHAN
LETTERS JOE ROSEN
EDITOR LARRY HAMA

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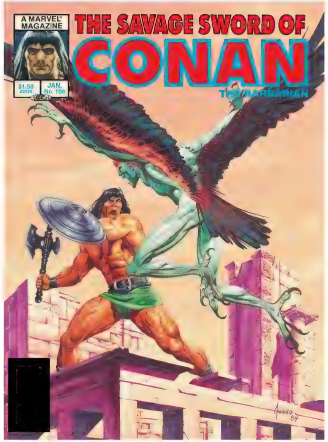
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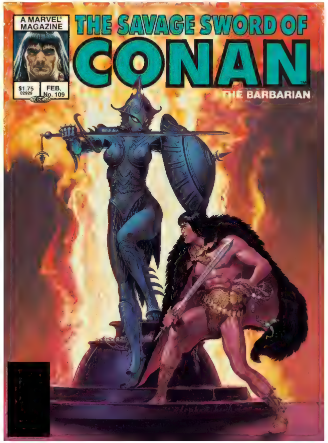
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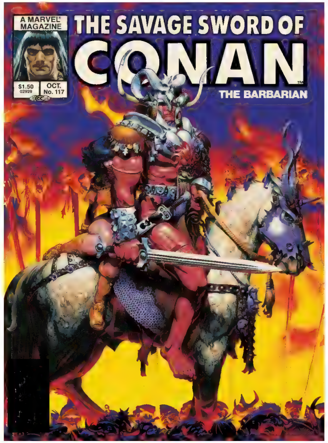
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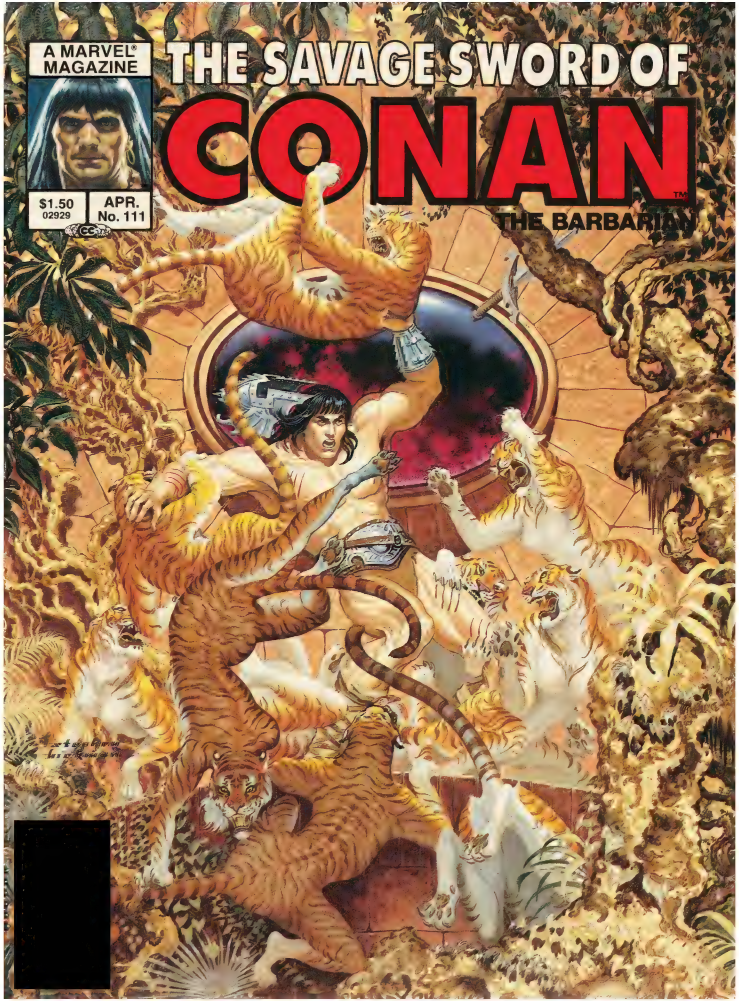
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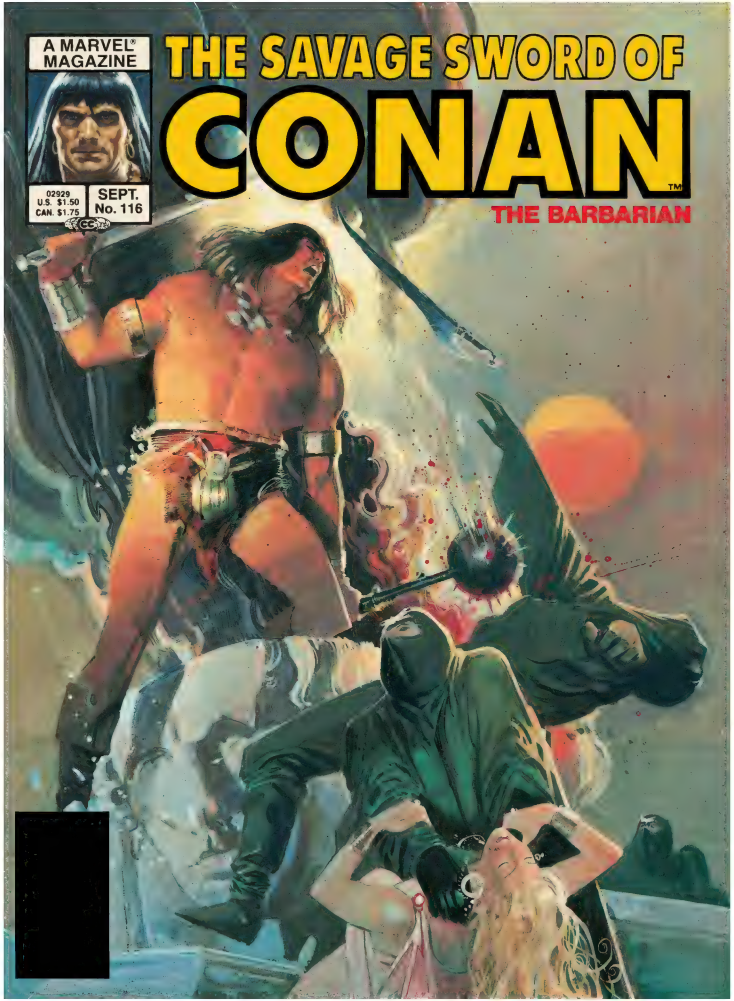
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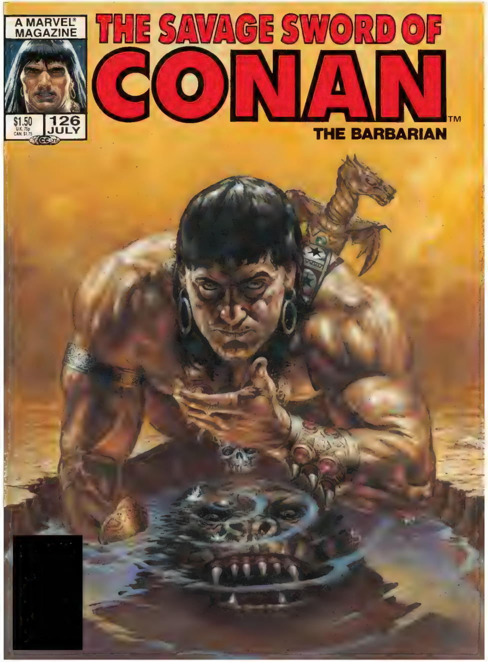
PAGE 168
(Upper left) *Savage Sword of Conan* No. 124. Cover. Michael Golden. May 1986.

(Upper right) *Savage Sword of Conan* No. 108. Cover. Joe Jusko. January 1985.

(Lower left) *Savage Sword of Conan* No. 109. Cover. Steve Hickman. February 1985.

(Lower right) *Savage Sword of Conan* No. 117. Cover. Michael Golden. October 1985.

PAGE 169
Savage Sword of Conan No. 111. Cover. Steve Hickman. February 1985.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JULY

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 116. Cover. Bill Sienkiewicz. September 1985.

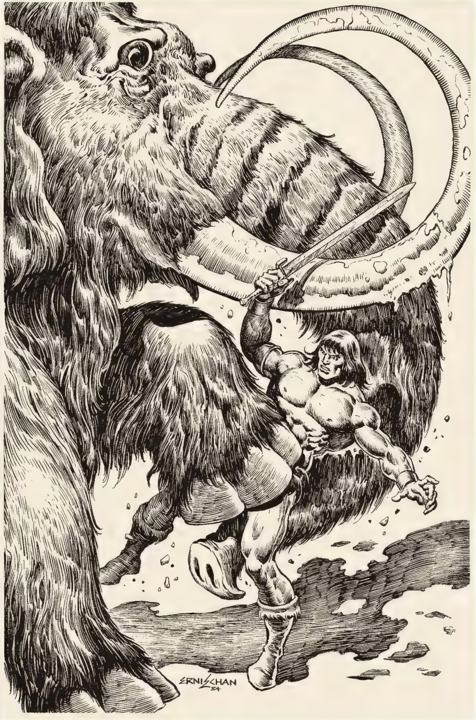
A longtime fan of the sword and sorcery genre, Sienkiewicz painted a pair of *Savage Sword* covers that drew upon the abstract qualities he had been pouring into his cutting-edge work on *New Mutants*. The artist's fondness for Conan would also lead to a 1984 calendar featuring the character.

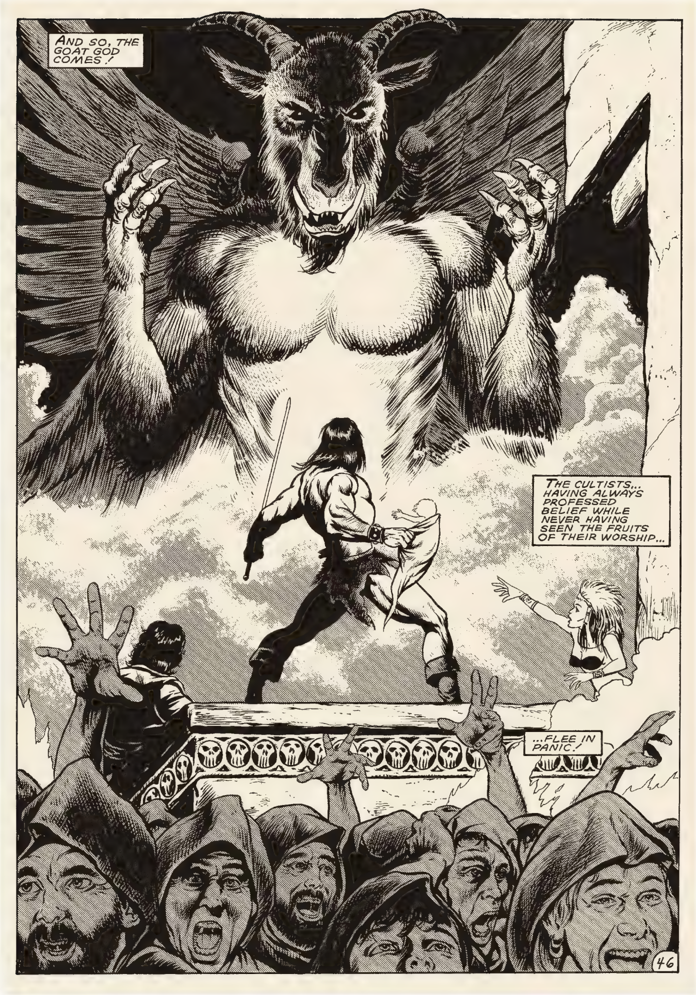
ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 126. Cover. Doug Beekman. July 1986.

BELOW
Savage Sword of Conan No. 124. Pinup. Ernie Chan. May 1986.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 125. Interior art, "At the Altar of the Goat God." Script, Christopher Priest; pencils and inks, Gary Kwapisz. June 1986.

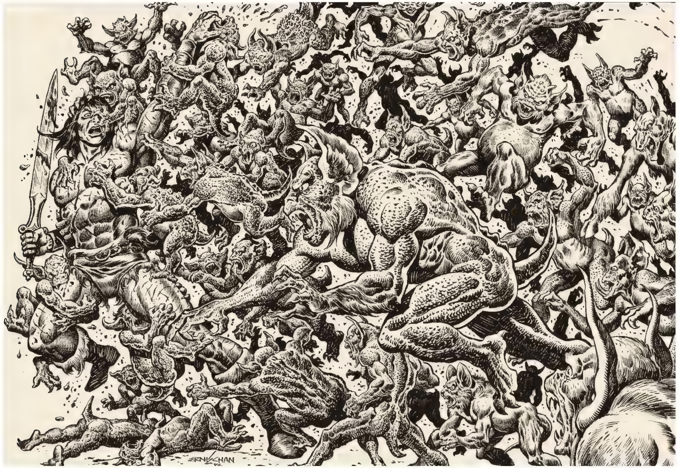
Roy Thomas has certified Gary Kwapisz as his favorite of the Conan artists from the time the writer spent away from the franchise. The visually inventive artist's attention to detail and knack for drawing everything from human drama to architecture—not to mention intense Conan battle action—ensconced him as one of the most prolific *Savage Sword* artists of the '80s.

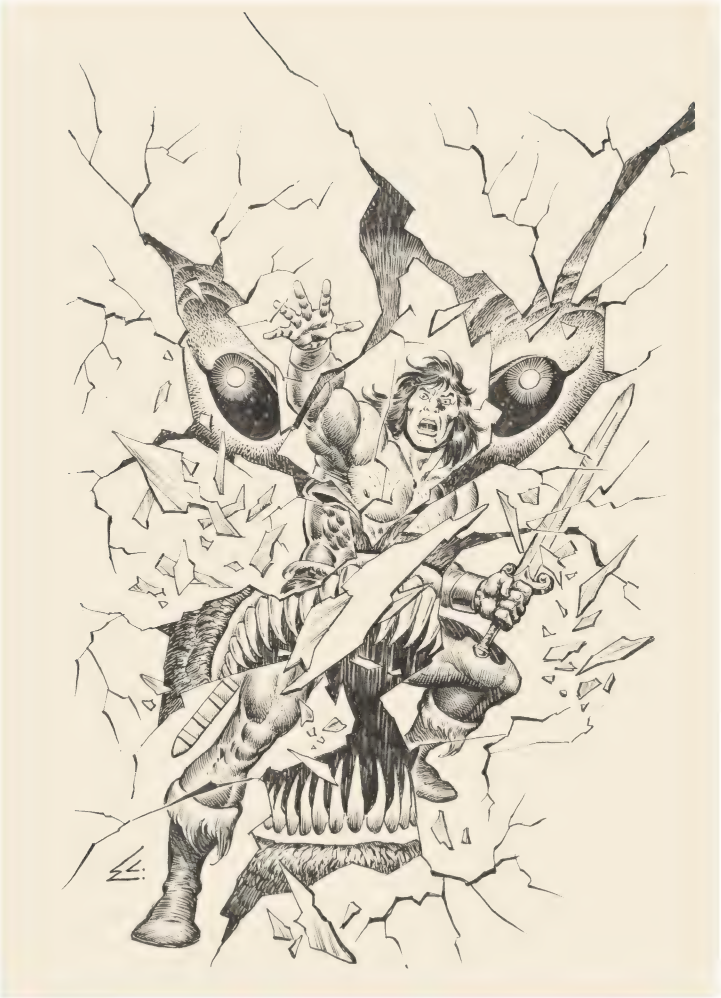

ERNIE CHAN '84

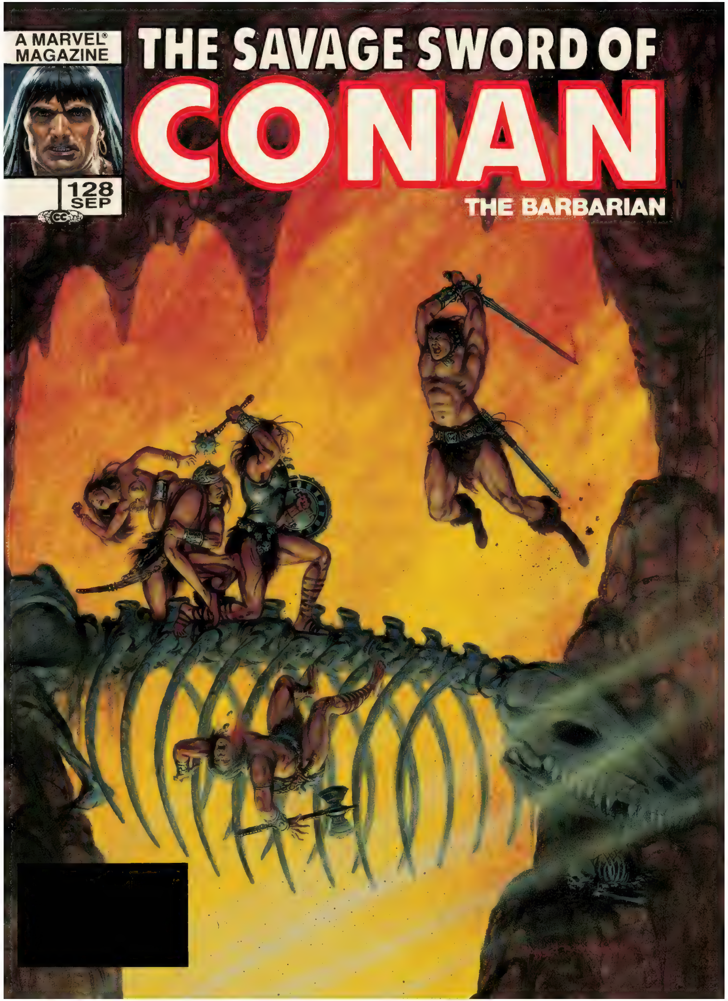

AND SO, THE GOAT GOD COMES!
THE CULTISTS... HAVING ALWAYS PROFESSED BELIEF WHILE NEVER HAVING SEEN THE FRUITS OF THEIR WORSHIP...
...FLEE IN PANIC!
46

BELOW
Savage Sword of Conan No. 125. Pinup. Ernie Chan. June 1986.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 127. Pinup. Ernie Chan. August 1986.



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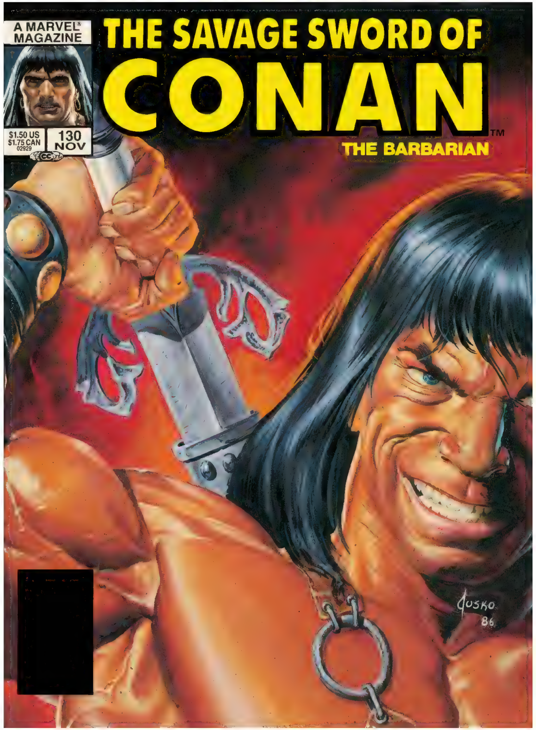
OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 128. Cover. David Mattingly. September 1986.

BELOW
Savage Sword of Conan No. 130. Cover. Joe Jusko. November 1986.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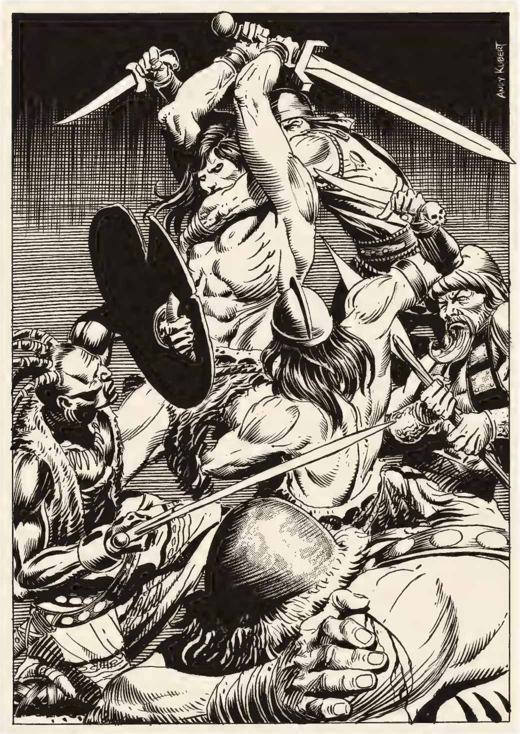
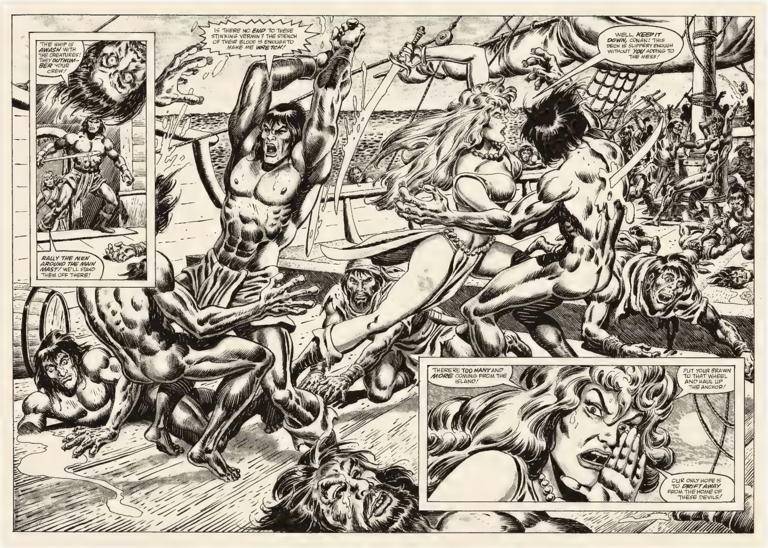
Jusko 86

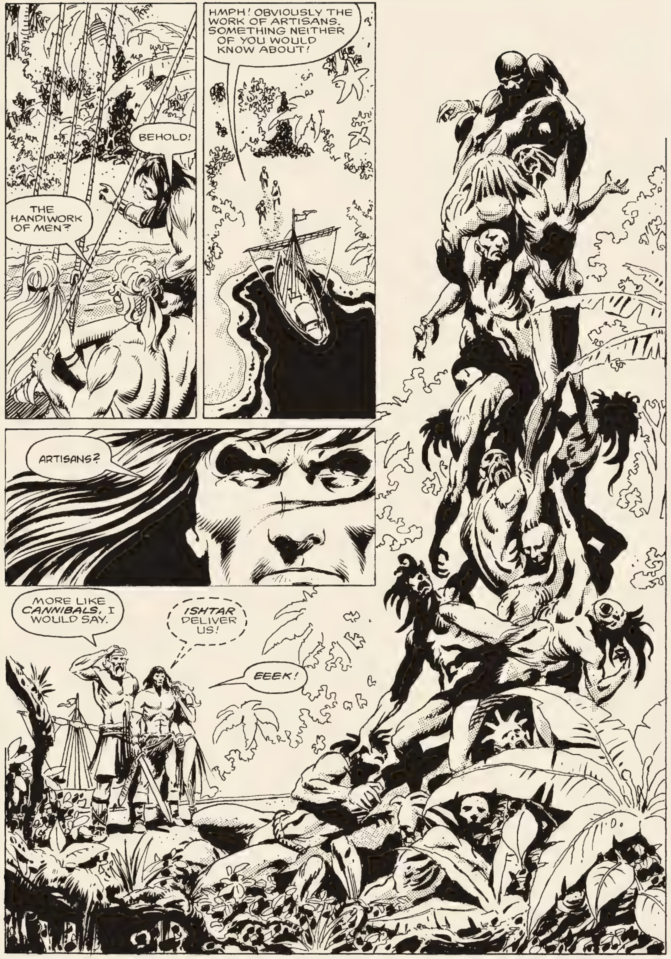
BELOW
Savage Sword of Conan No. 137. Pinup. Andy Kubert. June 1987.

Early in his career, Andy Kubert showed his iconic artist father's flair for form in his own linework.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 139. Interior art, "The Garden of Blood." Script, Chuck Dixon; pencils, Gary Kwapisz; inks, Ernie Chan. August 1987.

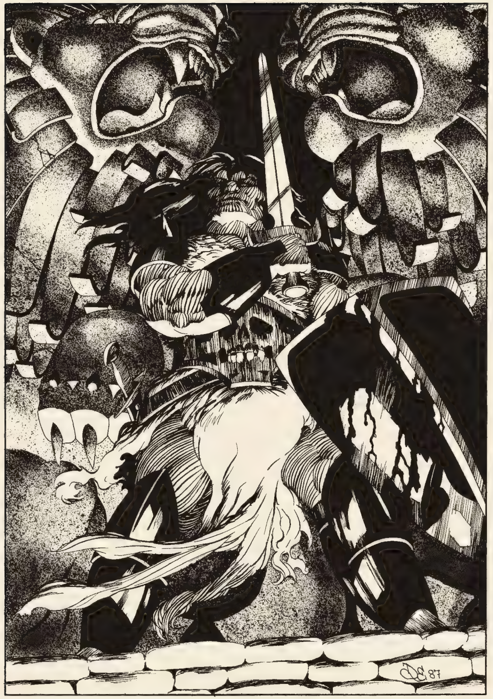

ANDY KUBERT

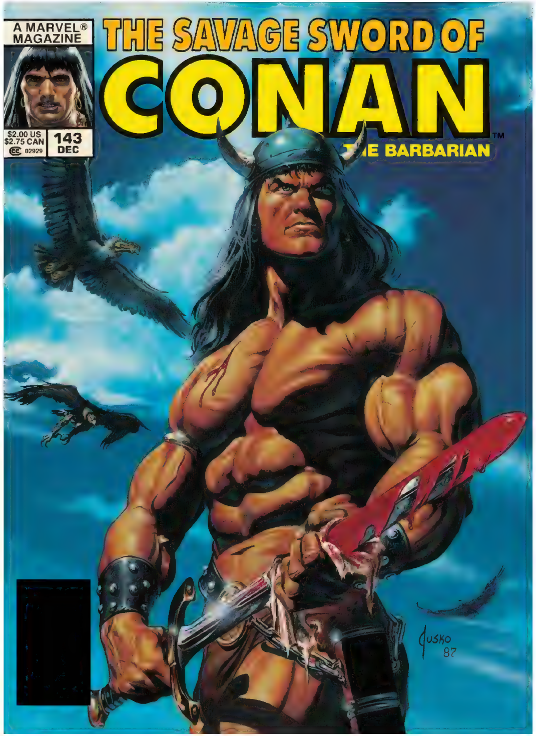

THE SHIP IS AWASH WITH THE CREATURES! THEY OUTNUMBER YOUR CREW!
RALLY THE MEN AROUND THE MAIN MAST! WE'LL STAND THEM OFF THERE!
IS THERE NO END TO THESE STINKING VERMIN? THE STENCH OF THEIR BLOOD IS ENOUGH TO MAKE ME WRETCH!
WELL, KEEP IT DOWN, CONAN! THIS DECK IS SLIPPERY ENOUGH WITHOUT YOU ADDING TO THE MESS!
THERERE TOO MANY AND MORE COMING FROM THE ISLAND!
PUT YOUR BRAWN TO THAT WHEEL AND HAUL UP THE ANCHOR!
OUR ONLY HOPE IS TO DRIFT AWAY FROM THE HOME OF THESE DEVILS!


BEHOLD!
THE HANDIWORK OF MEN?
HMPH! OBVIOUSLY THE WORK OF ARTISANS. SOMETHING NEITHER OF YOU WOULD KNOW ABOUT!
ARTISANS?
MORE LIKE *CANNIBALS*, I WOULD SAY.
ISHTAR DELIVER US!
EEEK!

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 136. Interior art, "Seventh Isle of Doom." Script, Larry Yakata; pencils and inks, Andy Kubert. May 1987.

RIGHT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 141. Pinup. Dale Eaglesham. October 1987.

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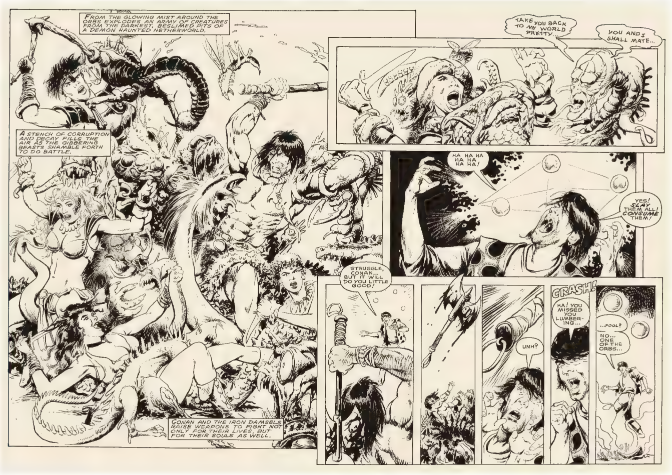
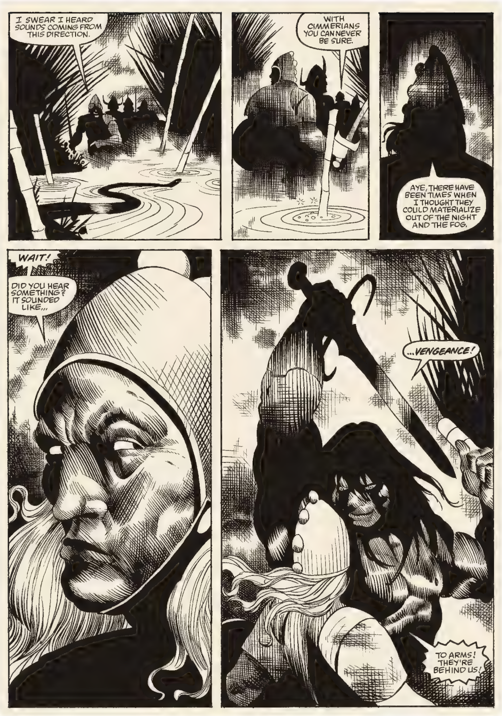
ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 143. Cover. Joe Jusko. December 1987.

BELOW
Savage Sword of Conan No. 154. Interior art, "Return of the Iron Damsels." Script, Chuck Dixon; pencils, Gary Kwapisz; inks, Ernie Chan. November 1988.

It's a fair cop for *Savage Sword* to acknowledge the myriad damsels in distress that were a staple in its many decades of covers and pages. But there were also plenty of strong female characters capable of standing up to any man that might get in their way—even Conan: Red Sonja, Bêlit and Valeria, to name a few. Add to this number the Iron Damsels, a band of fighting women introduced by writer Chuck Dixon, who appeared alongside Conan in multiple *Savage Sword* appearances.

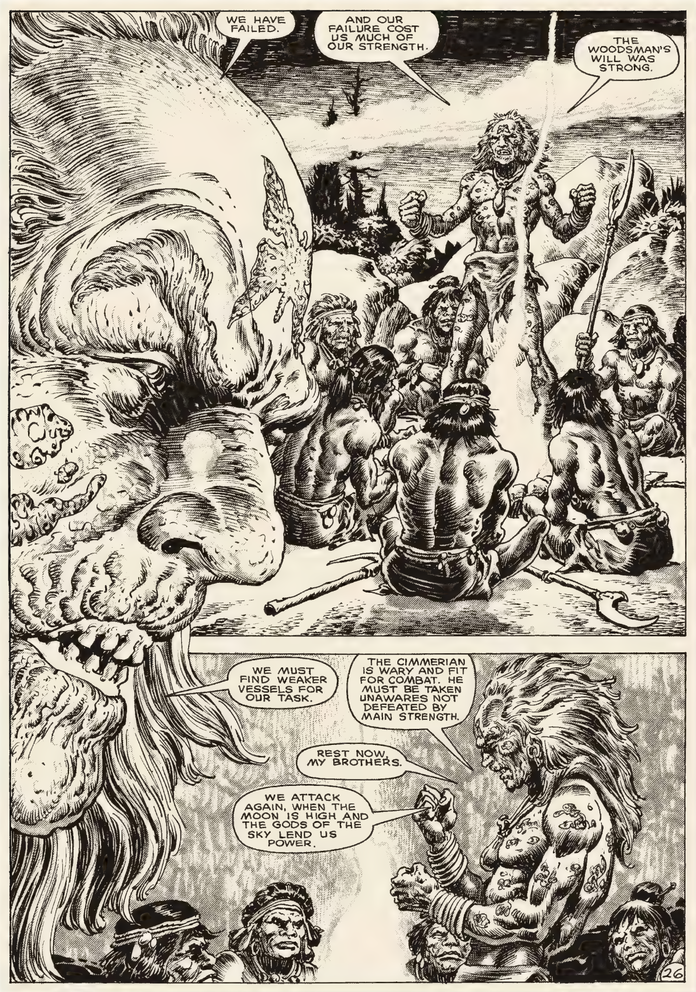

FROM THE GLOWING MIST AROUND THE ORBS EXPLODES AN ARMY OF CREATURES FROM THE DARKEST, BESLIMED PITS OF A DEMON HAUNTED NETHERWORLD.
A STENCH OF CORRUPTION AND DECAY FILLS THE AIR AS THE GIBBERING BEASTS SHAMBLE FORTH TO DO BATTLE.
TAKE YOU BACK TO MY WORLD PRETTY...
YOU AND I SHALL MATE...
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!
YES! SLAY THEM ALL! CONSUME THEM!
STRUGGLE, CONAN... BUT IT WILL DO YOU LITTLE GOOD!
CONAN AND THE IRON DAMSELS RAISE WEAPONS TO FIGHT NOT ONLY FOR THEIR LIVES, BUT FOR THEIR SOULS AS WELL.
UNH?
CRASH!
HA! YOU MISSED YOU LUMBERING...
...FOOL?
NO... ONE OF THE ORBS...

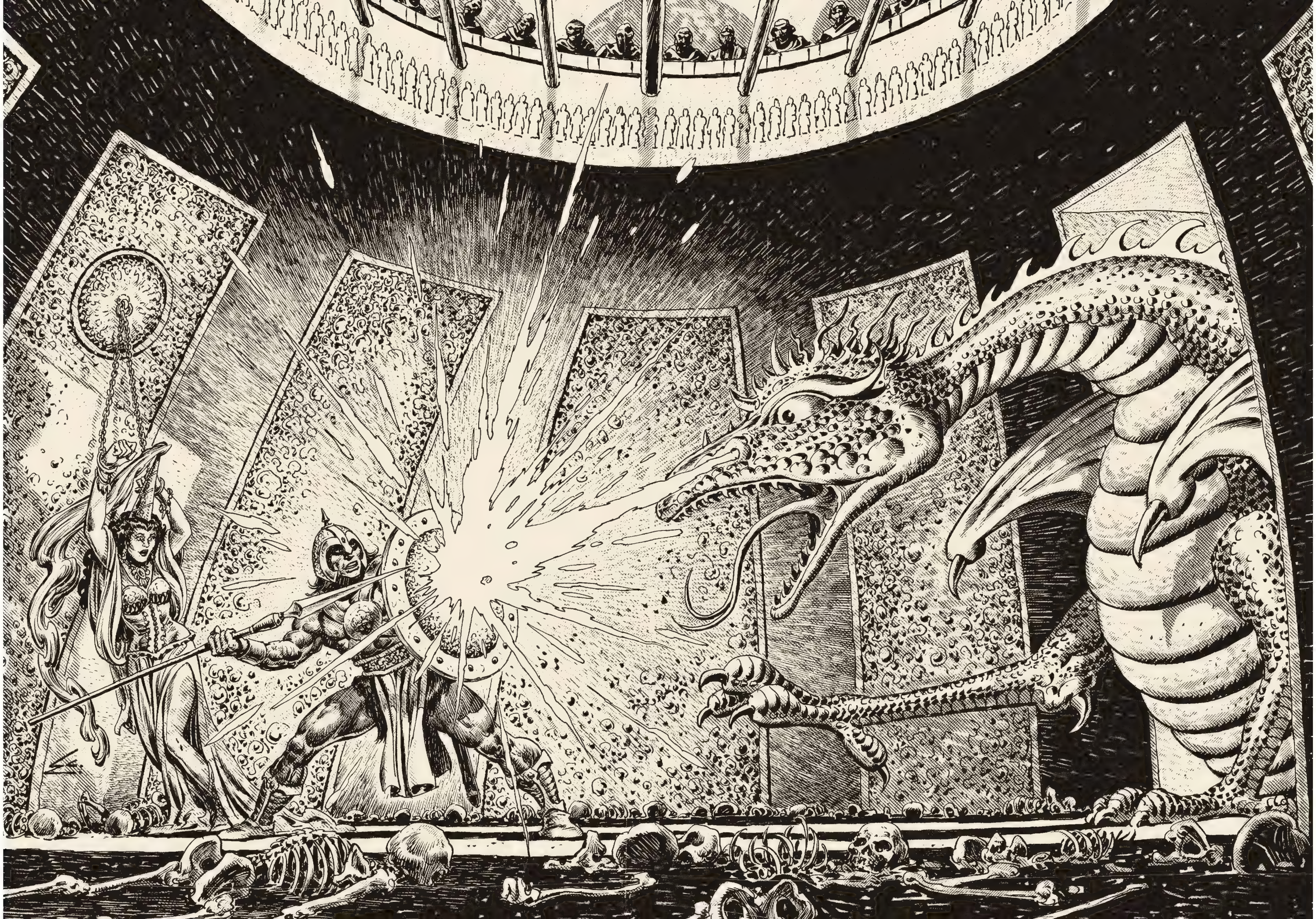

I SWEAR I HEARD SOUNDS COMING FROM THIS DIRECTION.
WITH CIMMERIANS YOU CAN NEVER BE SURE.
AYE, THERE HAVE BEEN TIMES WHEN I THOUGHT THEY COULD MATERIALIZE OUT OF THE NIGHT AND THE FOG.
WAIT!
DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING? IT SOUNDED LIKE...
...VENGEANCE!
TO ARMS! THEY'RE BEHIND US!

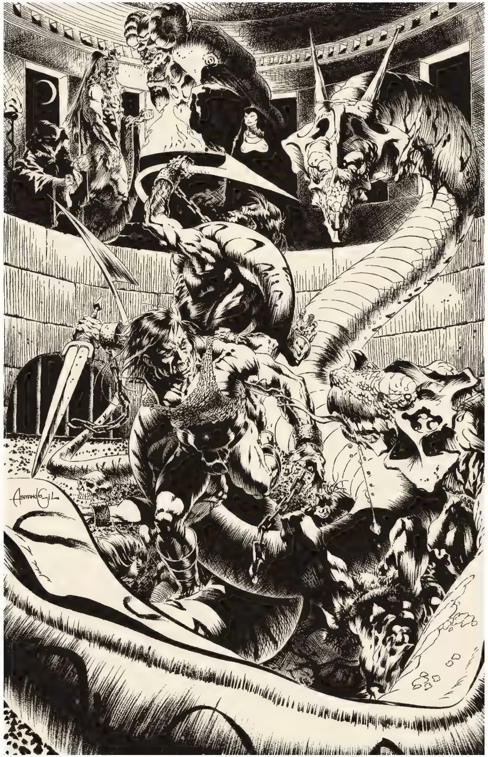
ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 157. Interior art, "The Wrath of Crom." Script, Don Kraar; pencils, Dale Eaglesham; inks, Pat Redding. February 1989.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 158. Interior art, "Bane of the Dark Brotherhood." Script, Chuck Dixon; pencils and inks, Ernie Chan. March 1989.

PAGES 186-187
Savage Sword of Conan No. 160. Pinup. Ernie Chan. May 1989.

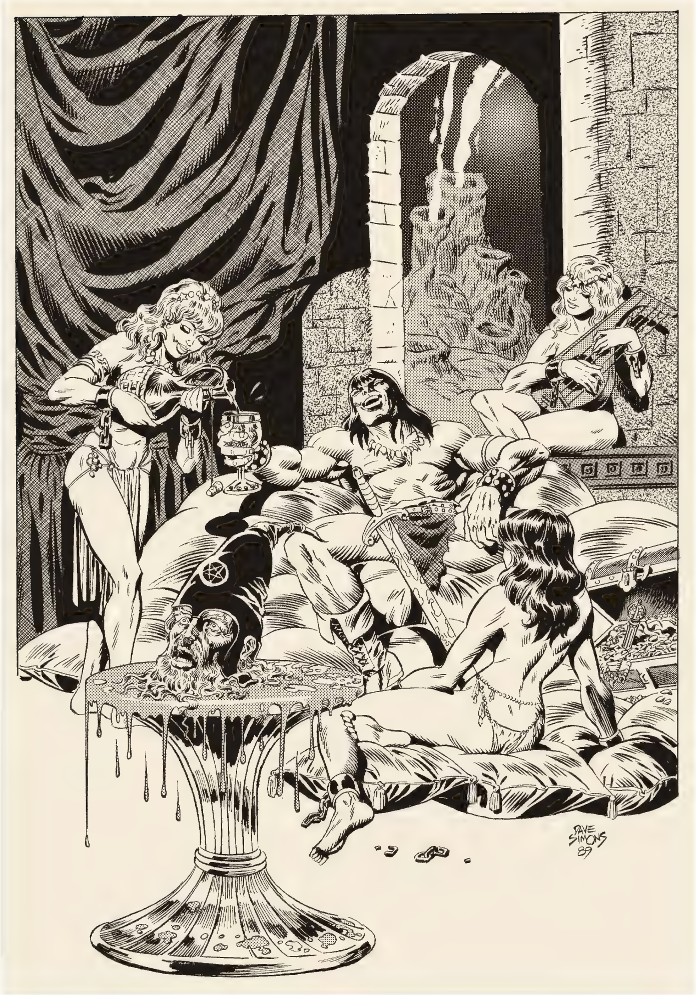

WE HAVE FAILED.
AND OUR FAILURE COST US MUCH OF OUR STRENGTH.
THE WOODSMAN'S WILL WAS STRONG.
WE MUST FIND WEAKER VESSELS FOR OUR TASK.
THE CIMMERIAN IS WARY AND FIT FOR COMBAT. HE MUST BE TAKEN UNAWARES NOT DEFEATED BY MAIN STRENGTH.
REST NOW, MY BROTHERS.
WE ATTACK AGAIN, WHEN THE MOON IS HIGH AND THE GODS OF THE SKY LEND US POWER.
26

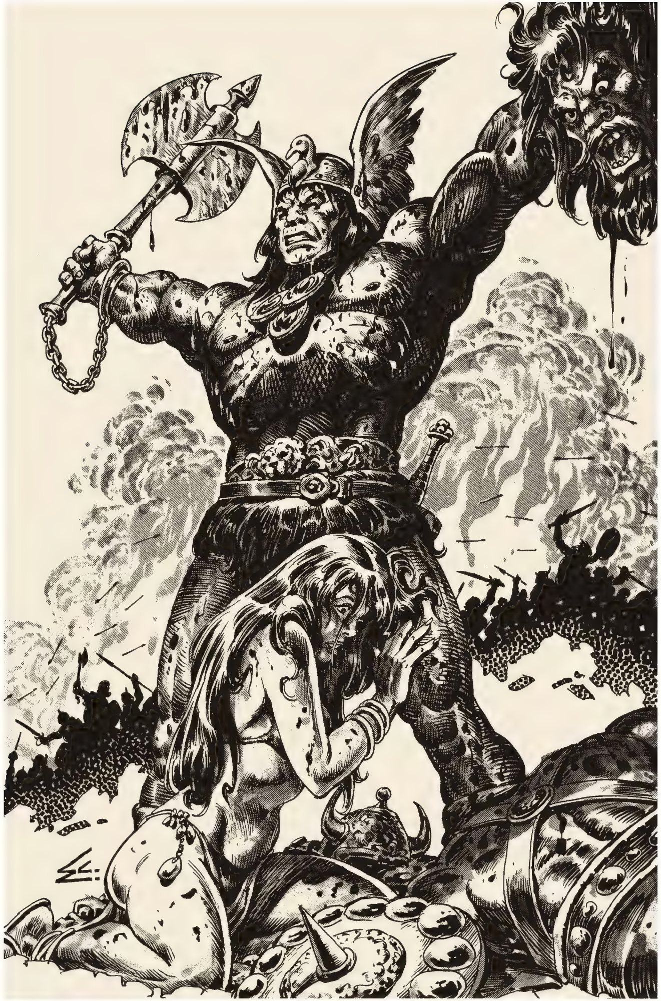


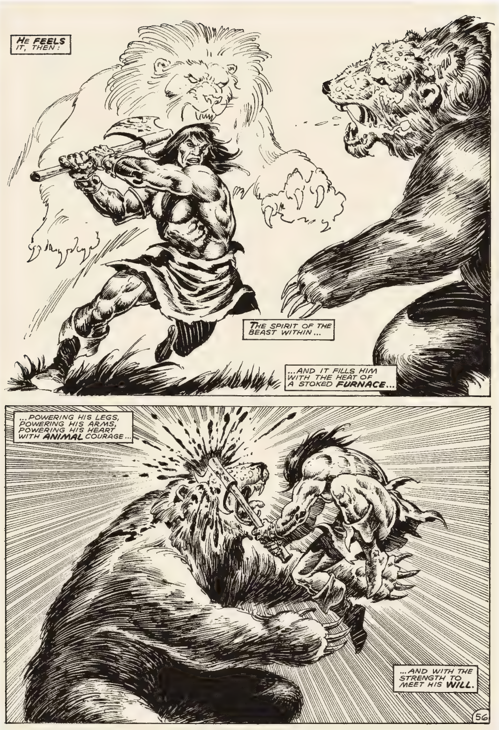


LEFT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 163.
Pinup. Armando Gil. August 1989.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 164.
Pinup. Dave Simons. September 1989.



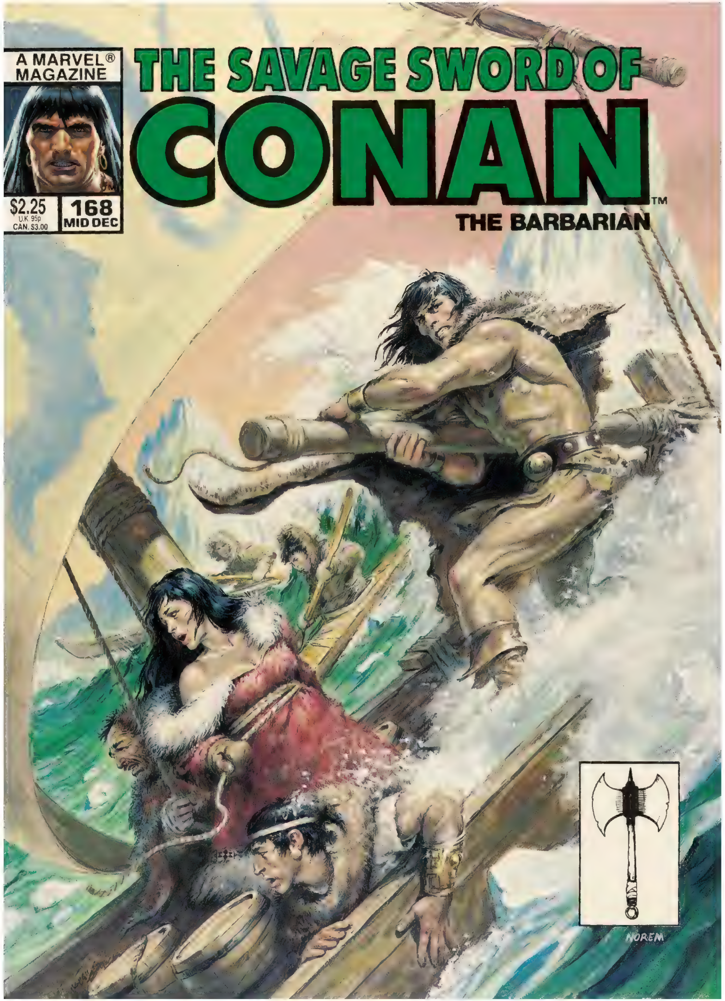



HE FEELS IT, THEN:
THE SPIRIT OF THE BEAST WITHIN...
...AND IT FILLS HIM WITH THE HEAT OF A STOKED FURNACE...
...POWERING HIS LEGS, POWERING HIS ARMS, POWERING HIS HEART WITH ANIMAL COURAGE...
...AND WITH THE STRENGTH TO MEET HIS WILL.
56

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 172. Pinup. Ernie Chan. April 1990.

ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 167. Interior art, "Spirit of the Beast (A Hyborian Odyssey, Part 2)." Script, Gerry Conway; pencils, Mike Docherty; inks, Ernie Chan. December 1989.

A prolific artist on the Conan color titles in the late '80s and early '90s—he was the flagship title's last ongoing artist—Scotsman Mike Docherty also brought his visceral style to the black-and-white pages of *Savage Sword*.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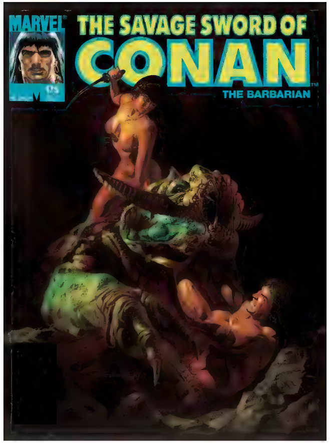
NOREM

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 168. Cover. Earl Norem. December 1989.

RIGHT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 175. Cover. Dorian Vallejo. July 1990.

Though his father had long since departed from comics work, Dorian Vallejo came on board with *Savage Sword* in 1988 to draw seven covers over the next three years, just one below the quantity turned in by Boris.

BELOW
Savage Sword of Conan No. 173. Cover. Nick Jainschigg. May 1990.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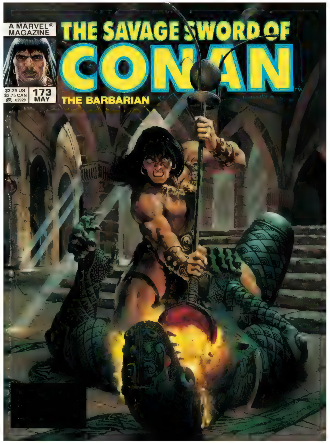
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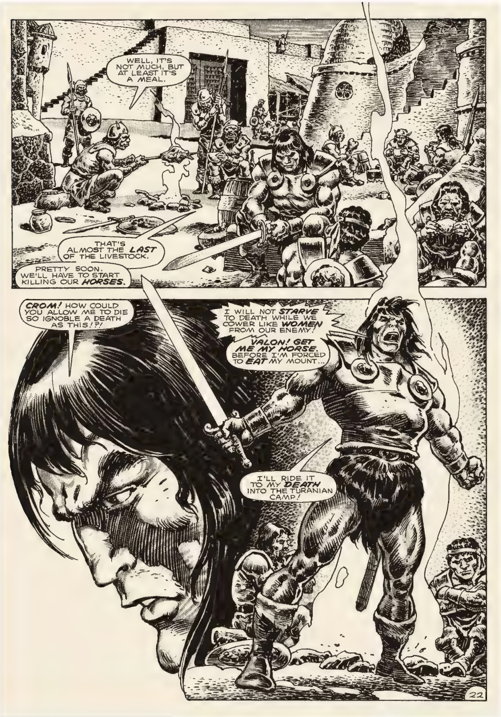
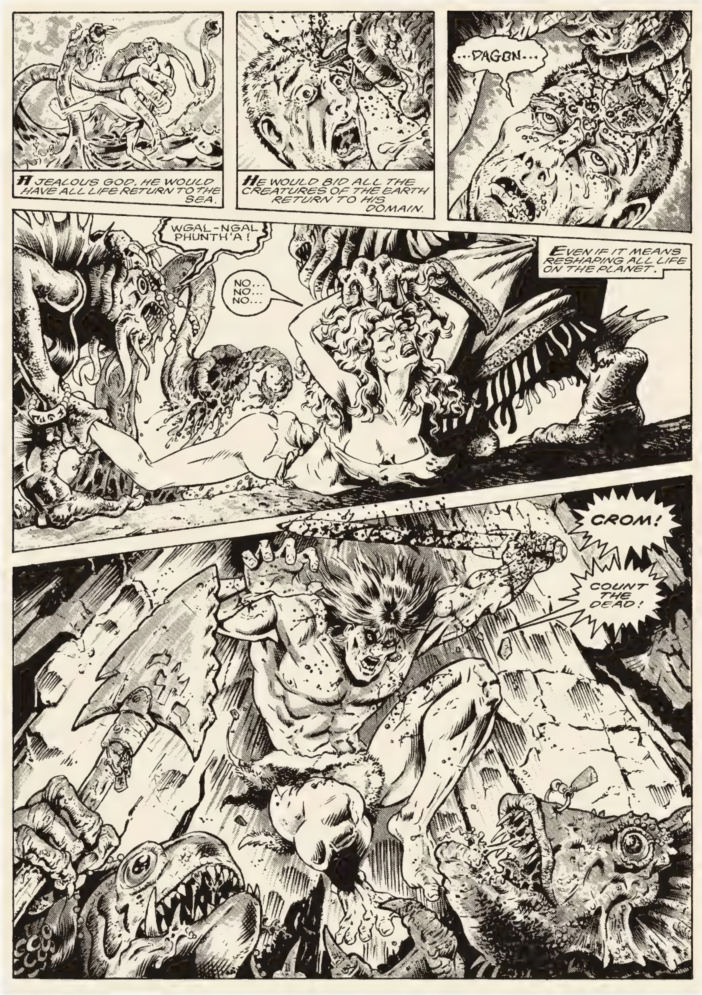
MAY

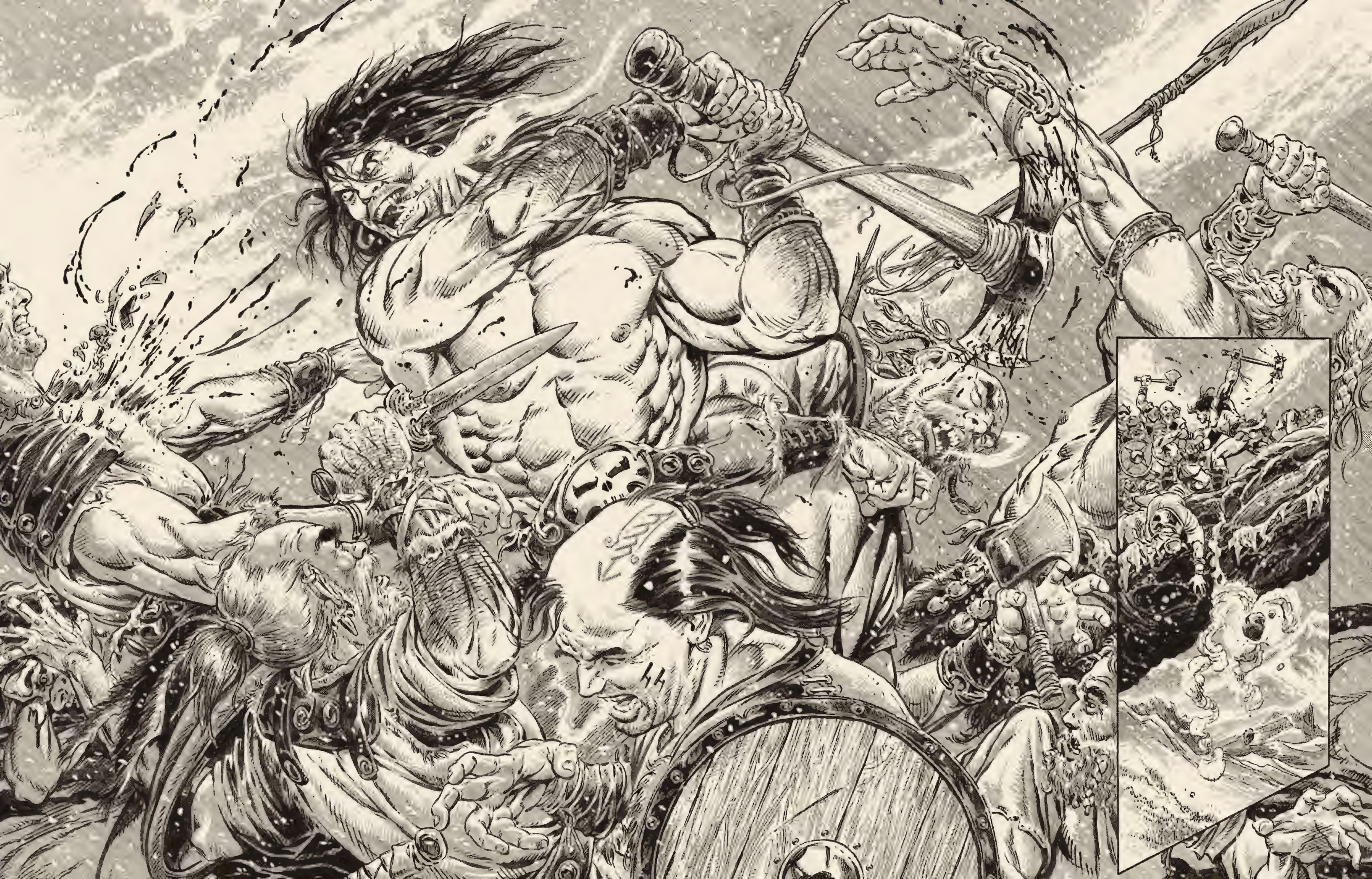

WELL, IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT AT LEAST IT'S A MEAL.
THAT'S ALMOST THE LAST OF THE LIVESTOCK.
PRETTY SOON, WE'LL HAVE TO START KILLING OUR HORSES.
CROM! HOW COULD YOU ALLOW ME TO DIE SO IGNOBLE A DEATH AS THIS!?!
I WILL NOT STARVE TO DEATH WHILE WE COWER LIKE WOMEN FROM OUR ENEMY!
VALON! GET ME MY HORSE, BEFORE I'M FORCED TO EAT MY MOUNT...
I'LL RIDE IT TO MY DEATH INTO THE TURANIAN CAMP!
22

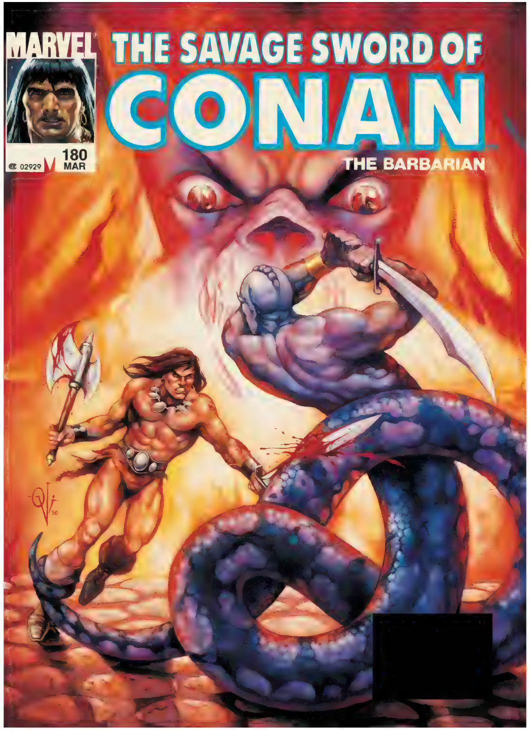
ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 173. Interior art, "A Tomb for the Living." Script, John Arcudi; pencils and inks, Ernie Chan. May 1990.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 176. Interior art, "The Three Deaths of Conan." Plot and pencils, Gary Kwapisz; script, Chuck Dixon; pencils, Gary Kwapisz; inks, Timothy Truman. August 1990.

PAGES 196-197
Conan the Savage No. 7. Interior art, "Howling in the Wilderness." Script, Chuck Dixon; pencils, Gary Kwapisz; inks, Vickie Williams. February 1996.


A JEALOUS GOD, HE WOULD HAVE ALL LIFE RETURN TO THE SEA.
HE WOULD BID ALL THE CREATURES OF THE EARTH RETURN TO HIS DOMAIN.
...DAGON...
WGAL-NGAL PHUNTH'A!
NO... NO... NO...
EVEN IF IT MEANS RESHAPING ALL LIFE ON THE PLANET.
CROM!
COUNT THE DEAD!

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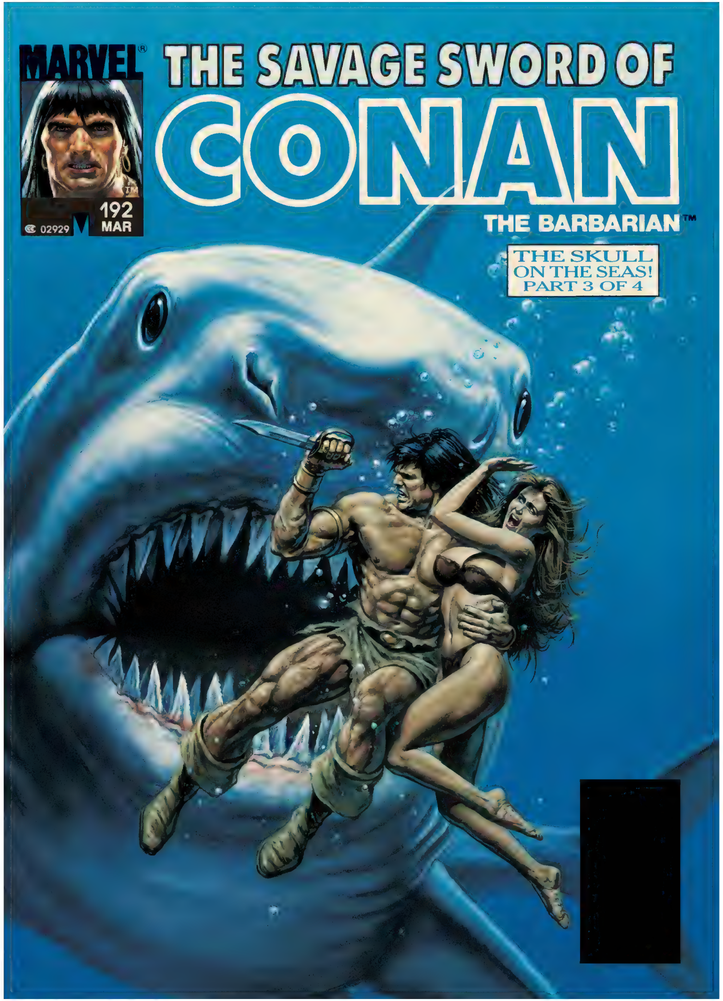
ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 180. Cover. Ovi Hondru. December 1990.

Ovi Hondru's life mirrored the wandering ways of Conan: A dissident behind the Iron Curtain of his home country of Romania, he battled his way through the bureaucracy to win his freedom and immigrated to America in the early '80s, wandering across the country before finally settling in Mexico. His hyper-masculine painting style was perfect for *Savage Sword*, and from 1989 to 1992, nobody painted more covers for the title than Hondru.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 192. Cover. Bob Larkin. December 1991.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THE BARBARIAN
THE SKULL ON THE SEAS! PART 3 OF 4
192
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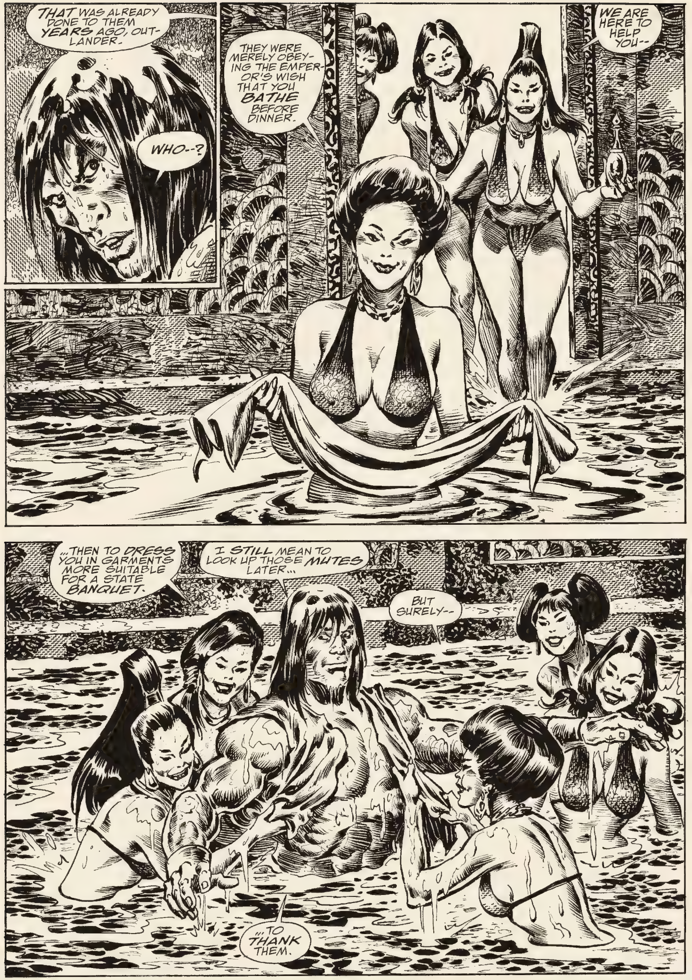
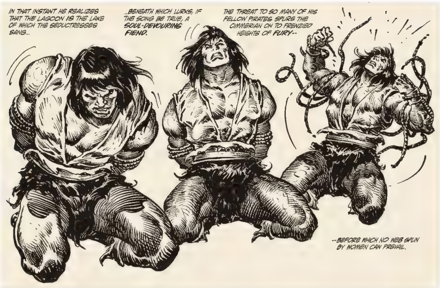
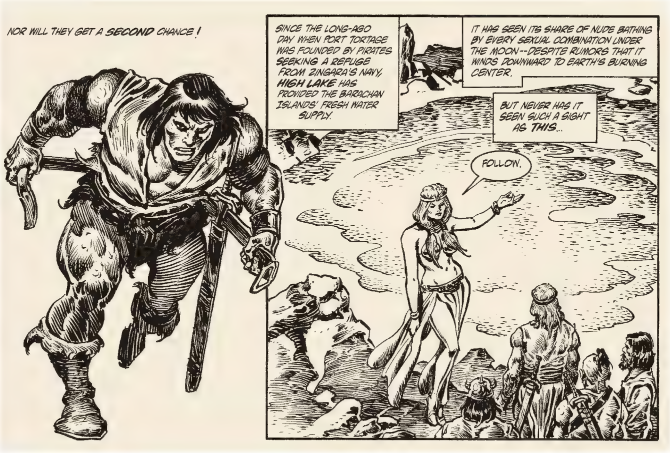

THAT WAS ALREADY DONE TO THEM YEARS AGO, OUT-LANDER.
WHO--?
THEY WERE MERELY OBEYING THE EMPEROR'S WISH THAT YOU BATHE BEFORE DINNER.
WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU--
...THEN TO DRESS YOU IN GARMENTS MORE SUITABLE FOR A STATE BANQUET.
I STILL MEAN TO LOOK UP THOSE MUTES LATER...
BUT SURELY--
...TO THANK THEM.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 194. Interior art, "The Witch-Queen of Yamatai." Script, Dann Thomas, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Ernie Chan. February 1992.

BELOW AND RIGHT
Savage Sword of Conan No. 197. Interior art, "A Night in Messantia." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Ernie Chan. June 1992.

After a seven-year absence, John Buscema was back as a regular artist, mostly supplying breakdowns with Ernie Chan settling in as his ongoing inker.

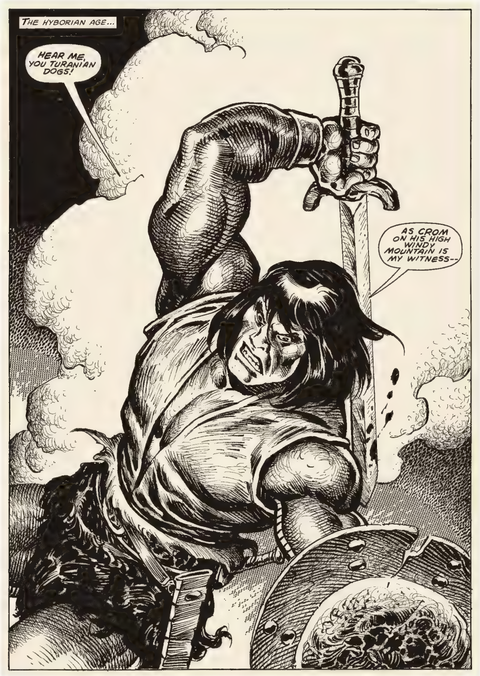

IN THAT INSTANT HE REALIZES THAT THE LAGOON IS THE LAKE OF WHICH THE SEDUCTRESSES SANG...
...BENEATH WHICH LURKS, IF THE SONG BE TRUE, A SOUL-DEVOURING FIEND.
THE THREAT TO SO MANY OF HIS FELLOW PIRATES SPURS THE CIMMERIAN ON TO FRENZIED HEIGHTS OF FURY--
--BEFORE WHICH NO WEB SPUN BY WOMEN CAN PREVAIL.


NOR WILL THEY GET A SECOND CHANCE!
SINCE THE LONG-AGO DAY WHEN PORT TORTAGE WAS FOUNDED BY PIRATES SEEKING A REFUGE FROM ZINGARA'S NAVY, HIGH LAKE HAS PROVIDED THE BARACHAN ISLANDS' FRESH WATER SUPPLY.
IT HAS SEEN ITS SHARE OF NUDE BATHING BY EVERY SEXUAL COMBINATION UNDER THE MOON--DESPITE RUMORS THAT IT WINDS DOWNWARD TO EARTH'S BURNING CENTER.
BUT NEVER HAS IT SEEN SUCH A SIGHT AS THIS...
FOLLOW.

BELOW

Savage Sword of Conan No. 200. Interior art, "Barbarians of the Border." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Ernie Chan. August 1992.

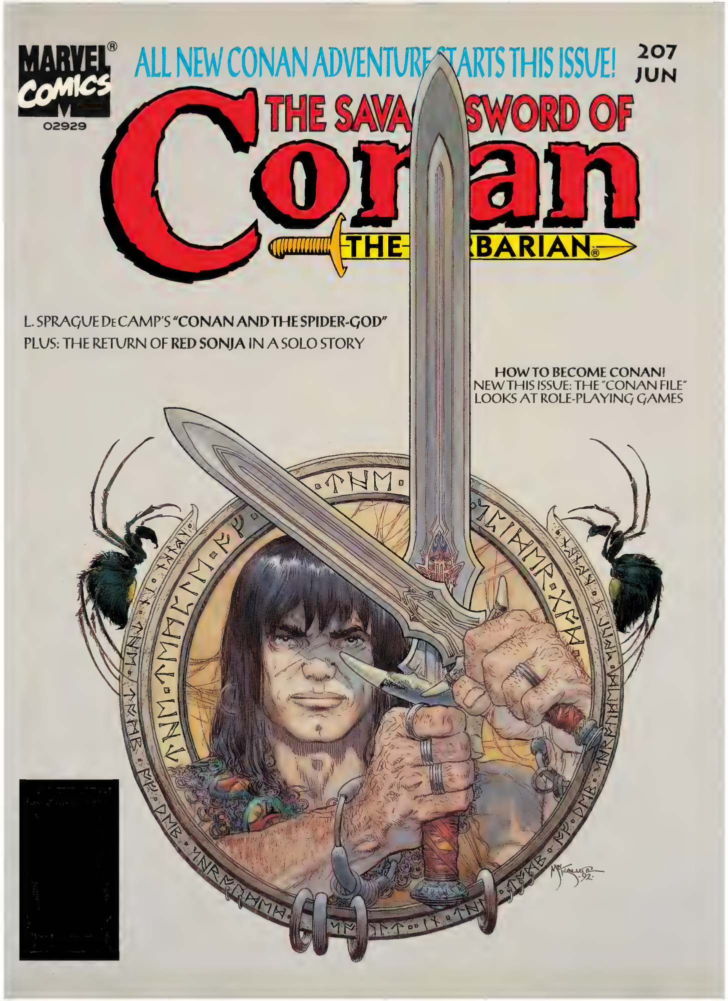
Buscema wasn't the only creative talent coming back to *Savage Sword*. Roy Thomas had returned to write for Marvel in 1988, and when asked to add the Conan titles to his workload in 1991, he agreed under the premise he would once again be able to tell Conan stories his way. With Buscema and Chan illustrating his all-new Conan adventures, it was as if the classic era of *Savage Sword* art had returned in the '90s.


THE HYBORIAN AGE...
HEAR ME, YOU TURANIAN DOGS!
AS CROM ON HIS HIGH WINDY MOUNTAIN IS MY WITNESS--

OPPOSITE

Savage Sword of Conan No. 207. Cover. Michael Kaluta. March 1993.

A former studio-mate to Barry Windsor-Smith, Marvel's Conan-defining artist of the initial run of *Conan the Barbarian* comics, Michael Kaluta illustrated four covers to *Savage Sword*, but his work was more often seen on the covers to *King Conan*. (The March 1993 issue of *Savage Sword* that featured Kaluta's cover art also carried a typo indicating it as the June issue.)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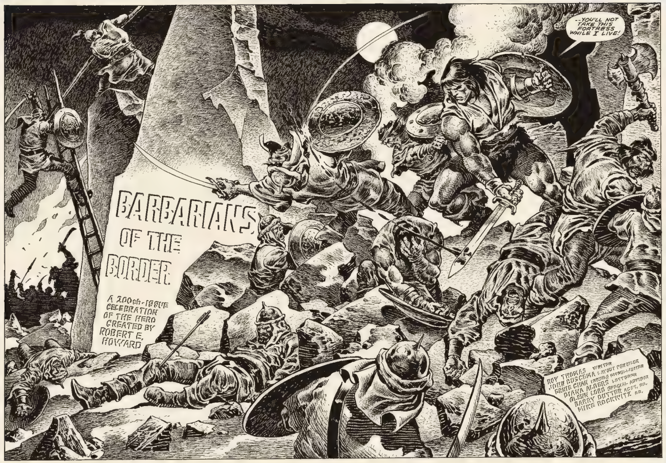
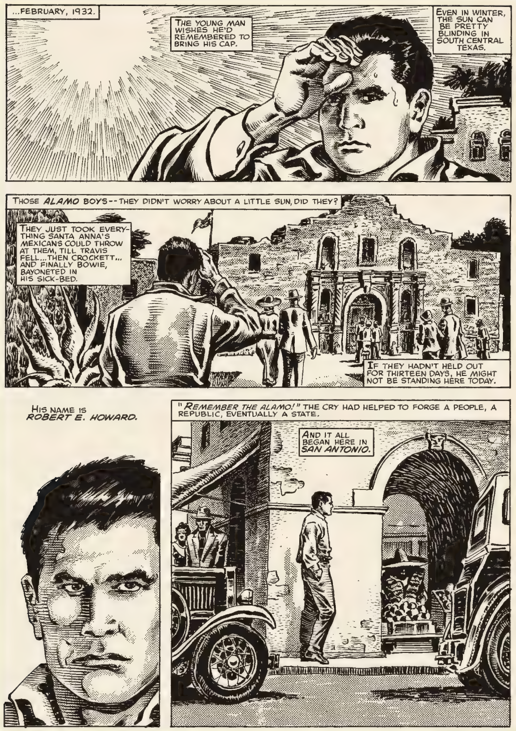
L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP'S "CONAN AND THE SPIDER-GOD"
PLUS: THE RETURN OF RED SONJA IN A SOLO STORY
HOW TO BECOME CONAN!
NEW THIS ISSUE: THE "CONAN FILE" LOOKS AT ROLE-PLAYING GAMES
M. Kaluta '92

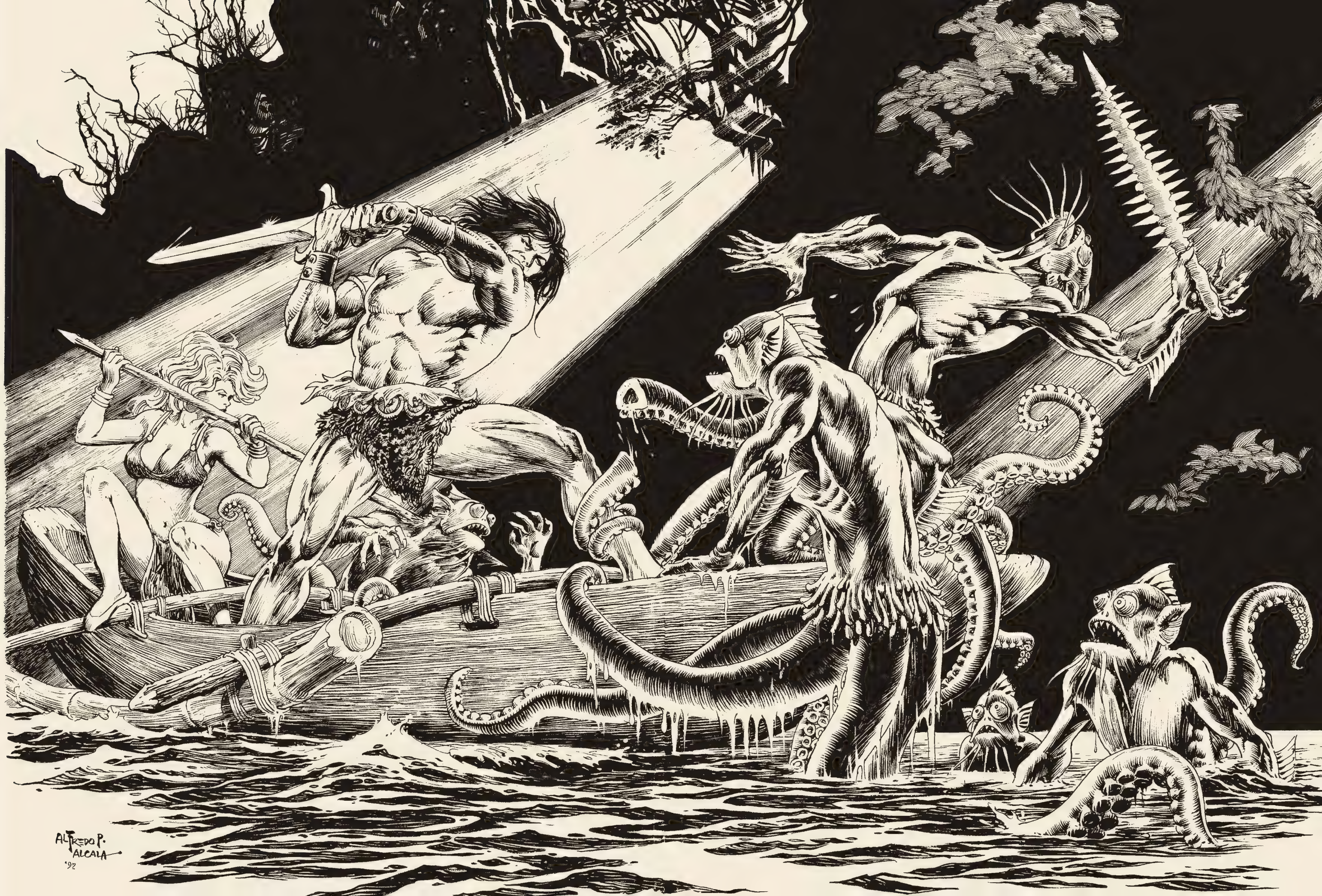
BELOW AND OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 200. Interior art, "Barbarians of the Border." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Ernie Chan. August 1992.

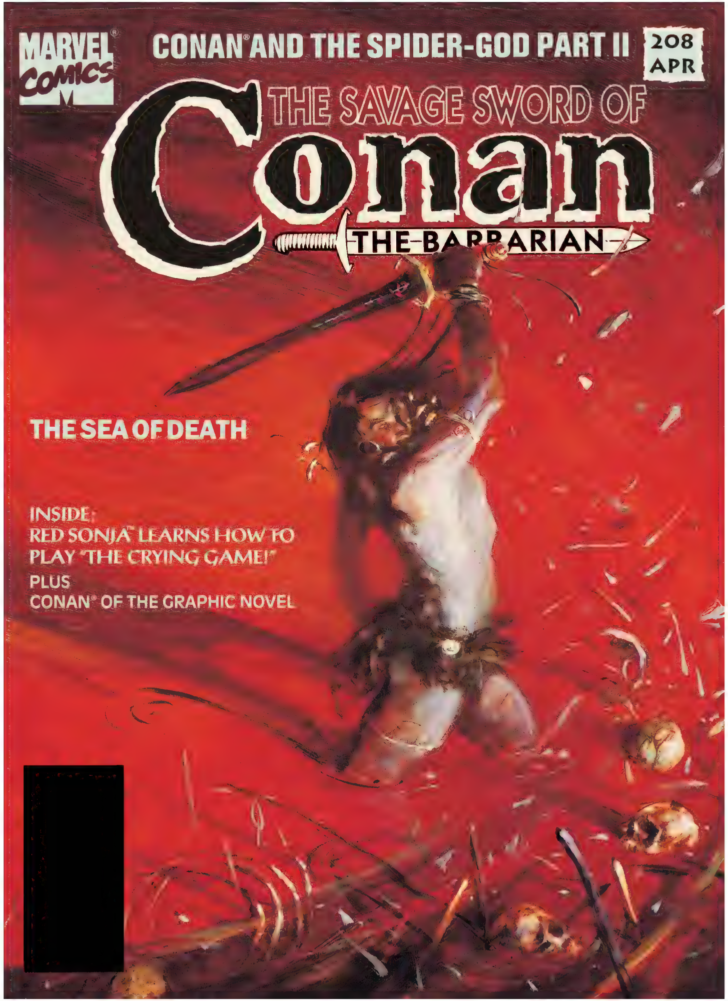
Savage Sword had succeeded well beyond any of its black-and-white magazine brethren from the 1970s, and to celebrate the supreme achievement of reaching 200 issues, Thomas and Buscema delivered a tale that made Robert E. Howard a character in the long-standing Conan drama. "Barbarians of the Border" imagined a young Howard on a Texas road trip to the Mexican border, a real life event that the writer said inspired his creation of Conan.


...YOU'LL NOT TAKE THIS FORTRESS WHILE I LIVE!
BARBARIANS OF THE BORDER
A 200th-ISSUE CELEBRATION OF THE HERO CREATED BY ROBERT E. HOWARD
ROY THOMAS WRITER
JOHN BUSCEMA LAYOUT PENCILER
ERNIE CHAN INKER & EMBELLISHER
DIANA ALBERS LETTERER
GLENN LORD SPECIAL ADVISOR
BARRY DUTTER ASST. ED.
MIKE ROCKWITZ ED.


...FEBRUARY, 1932.
THE YOUNG MAN WISHES HE'D REMEMBERED TO BRING HIS CAP.
EVEN IN WINTER, THE SUN CAN BE PRETTY BLINDING IN SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS.
THOSE ALAMO BOYS--THEY DIDN'T WORRY ABOUT A LITTLE SUN, DID THEY?
THEY JUST TOOK EVERYTHING SANTA ANNA'S MEXICANS COULD THROW AT THEM, TILL TRAVIS FELL...THEN CROCKETT... AND FINALLY BOWIE, BAYONETED IN HIS SICK-BED.
IF THEY HADN'T HELD OUT FOR THIRTEEN DAYS, HE MIGHT NOT BE STANDING HERE TODAY.
HIS NAME IS ROBERT E. HOWARD.
"REMEMBER THE ALAMO!" THE CRY HAD HELPED TO FORGE A PEOPLE, A REPUBLIC, EVENTUALLY A STATE.
AND IT ALL BEGAN HERE IN SAN ANTONIO.

PAGES 206-207
Savage Sword of Conan No. 207. Pinup. Alfredo Alcala. March 1993.


ALFREDO P. ALCALA
'92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CONAN® AND THE SPIDER-GOD PART II
208
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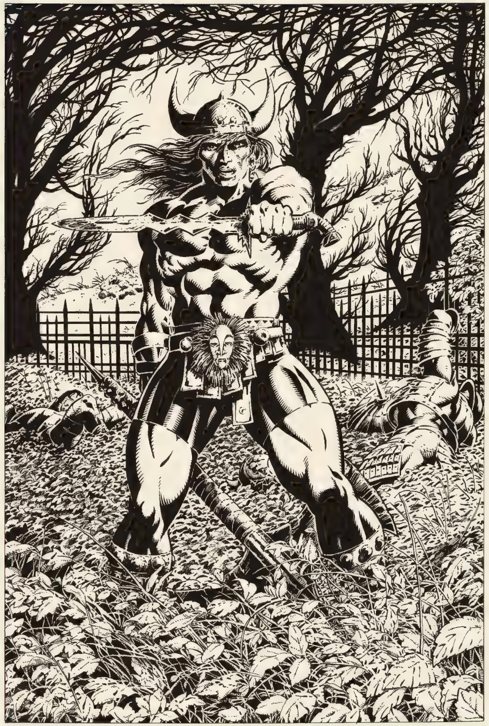
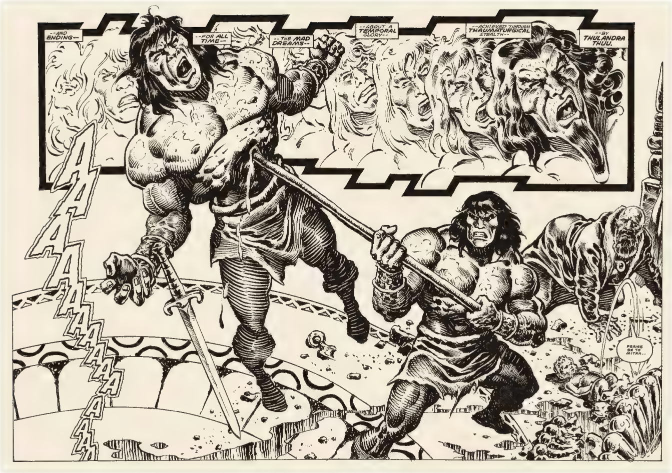
THE SEA OF DEATH
INSIDE:
RED SONJA® LEARNS HOW TO
PLAY "THE CRYING GAME!"
PLUS
CONAN® OF THE GRAPHIC NOVEL

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 208. Cover. George Pratt. April 1993.

BELOW
Savage Sword of Conan No. 210. Pinup. Rafael Kayanan. June 1993.

Rafael Kayanan delivered some sensational art across the various Conan titles in 1993–1995, including a sequel to "Red Nails" that played out over five issues.

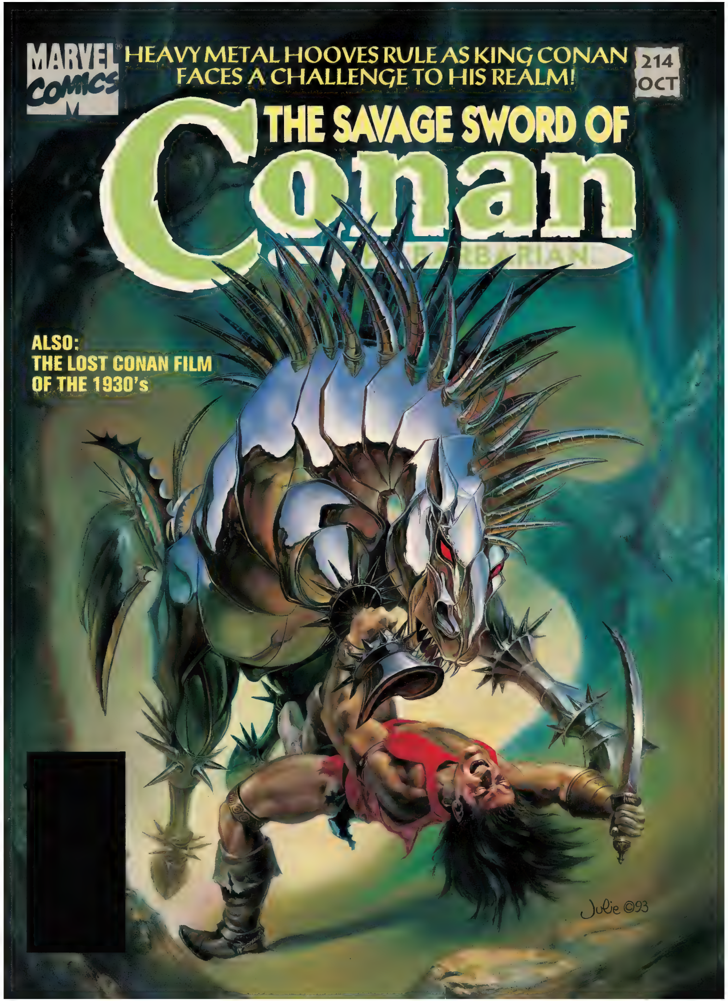



--AND ENDING--
--FOR ALL TIME--
--THE MAD DREAMS--
--ABOUT A TEMPORAL GLORY--
--ACHIEVED THROUGH THAUMATURGICAL STEALTH--
--BY THULANDRA THUU.
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
PRAISE BE TO MITRA...

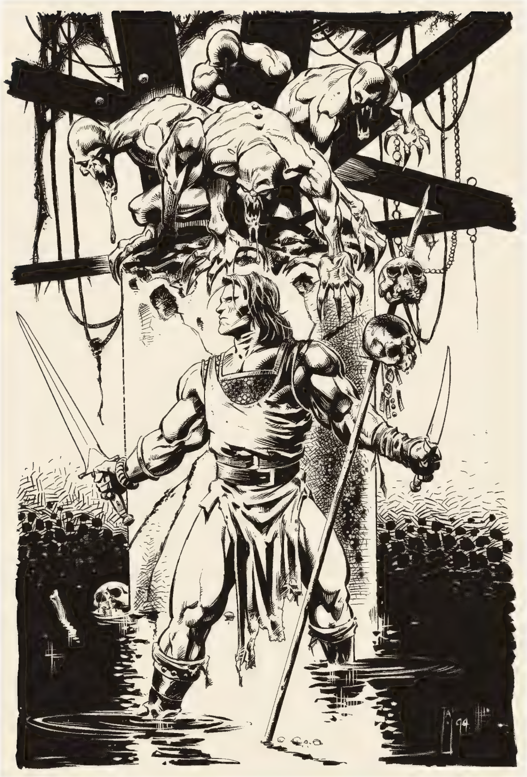
ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 214. Interior art, "The Reign of Thulandra Thuu." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils and inks, Ernie Chan. October 1993.

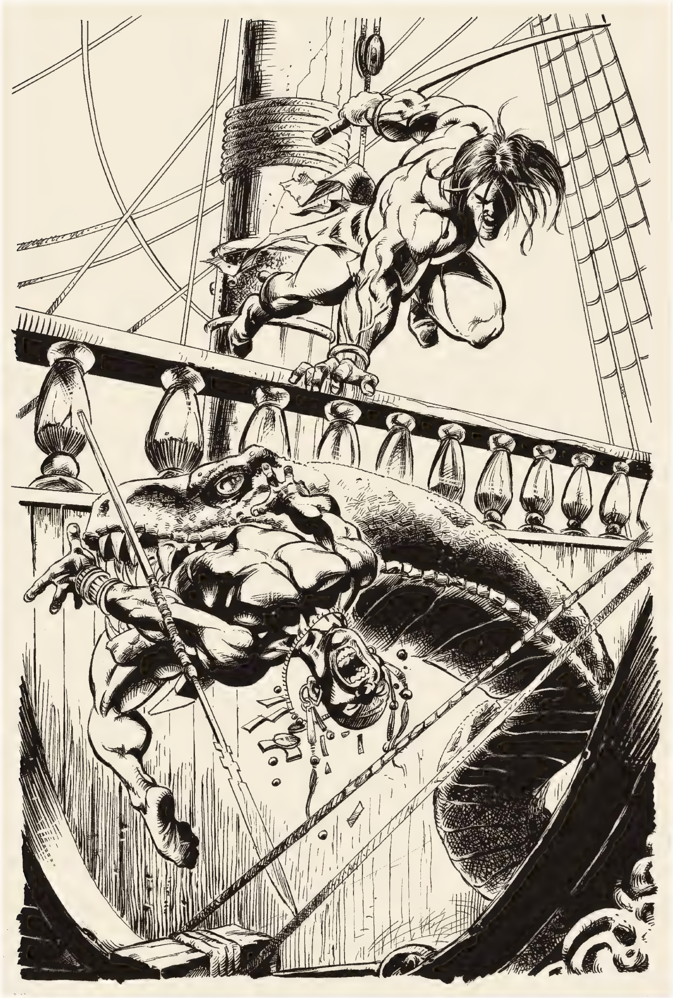
OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 214. Cover. Julie Bell. October 1993.

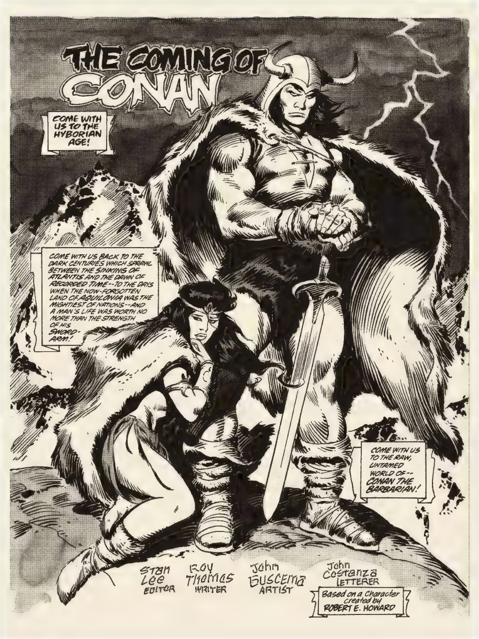
Boris Vallejo may have long since departed from work in comics, but his wife, Julie Bell, had her work appear on a pair of *Savage Sword* covers in 1993—one of which pictured the gleaming ferocity of the Iron Stallion of Thulandra Thuu—giving her the honor of being the first woman to paint a cover for the title.


MARVEL COMICS
HEAVY METAL HOOVES RULE AS KING CONAN FACES A CHALLENGE TO HIS REALM!
214 OCT
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF Conan THE BARBARIAN
ALSO: THE LOST CONAN FILM OF THE 1930's
Julie ©93

OPPOSITE AND BELOW
Savage Sword of Conan No. 223. Pinups. Andrew Currie. July 1994.





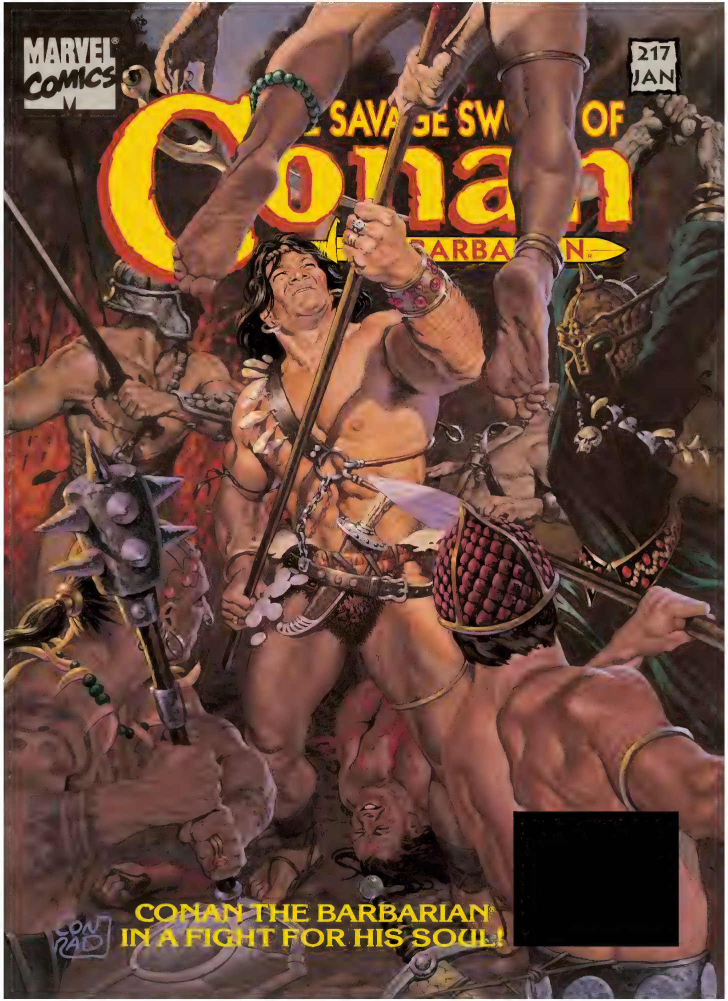

THE COMING OF CONAN
COME WITH US TO THE HYBORIAN AGE!
COME WITH US BACK TO THE DARK CENTURIES WHICH SPRAWL BETWEEN THE SINKING OF ATLANTIS AND THE DAWN OF RECORDED TIME--TO THE DAYS WHEN THE NOW-FORGOTTEN LAND OF AQUILONIA WAS THE MIGHTIEST OF NATIONS--AND A MAN'S LIFE WAS WORTH NO MORE THAN THE STRENGTH OF HIS SWORD-ARM!
COME WITH US TO THE RAW, UNTAMED WORLD OF-- CONAN THE BARBARIAN!
Stan Lee EDITOR
Roy Thomas WRITER
John Buscema ARTIST
John Costanza LETTERER
Based on a Character created by ROBERT E. HOWARD

ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 222. Interior art, "The Coming of Conan." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils and inks, John Buscema. June 1994.

John Buscema had been all set to draw the first issue of the color *Conan the Barbarian* comic book in the summer of 1970, but budget restrictions determined that a hot new creative talent—and a cheaper one—would have the honors, and so Barry Windsor-Smith did the honors. Twenty-four years later, Buscema would have a chance to draw the inaugural story, "The Coming of Conan," when Roy Thomas' original plot synopsis was discovered, a milestone moment to bring things full circle as *Savage Sword* wound down its historic 235-issue run.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 217. Cover. Tim Conrad. January 1994.

Tim Conrad, one of the young gun talents that were regular contributors in the early years of *Savage Sword*, returned near the series' end to paint a trio of covers.


MARVEL COMICS
217 JAN
SAVA GE SW OF
Cona n
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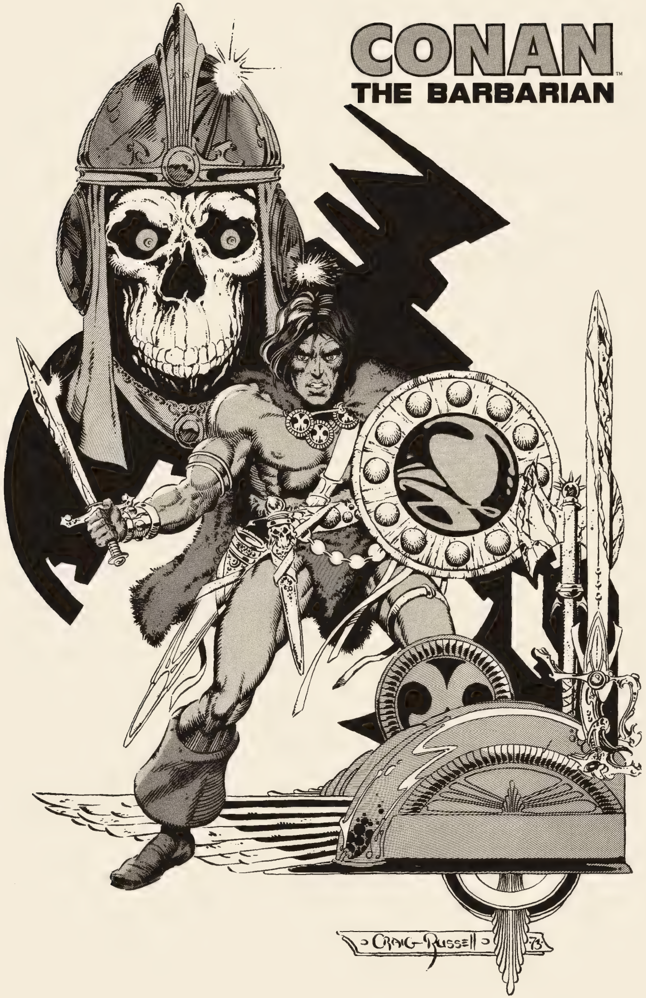
CONAN THE BARBARIAN IN A FIGHT FOR HIS SOUL!
CONRAD

[redacted]



AFTERWORD

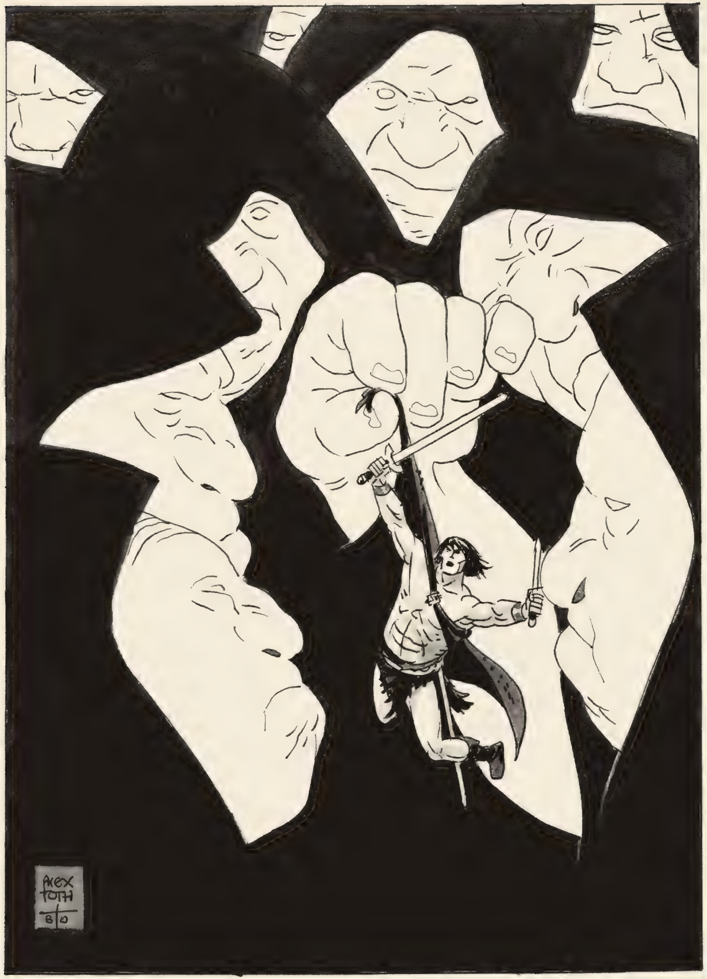
by P. Craig Russell

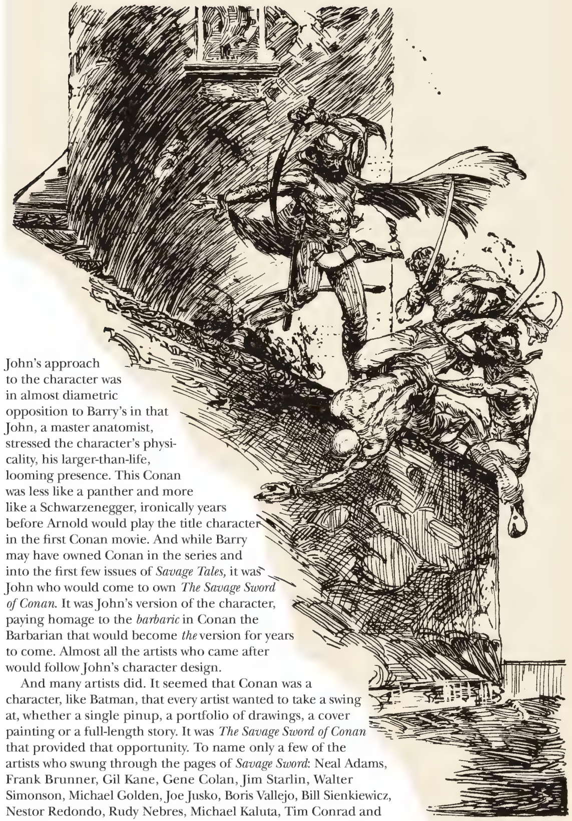
Like many in my generation—teenagers in the mid-’60s—my first exposure to Conan the literary character came from a paperback book rack. My particular book rack was in the Hills department store outside Wellsville, Ohio. Actually, it was a triple exposure: In addition to the character of Conan—which was to take on a life of its own in comic books, graphic novels and movies—there was the introduction to the stories of Robert E. Howard and to the artwork of Frank Frazetta. Of course it was Frazetta’s cover art that caused me to gaze in wonderlust and to empty my pockets. Frazetta’s visualization—a lithe, panther-like Conan—was closest to Howard’s description and held sway in my mind for the rest of the decade.

Then in 1970, the announcement came that Marvel Comics had secured the rights to Howard’s creation and would be publishing a Conan comic book. Expectations were high, and pity the poor artist who had to follow in Frazetta’s footsteps. Enter Barry Windsor-Smith, a very young artist still in search of his own visual “voice.” It didn’t take long. By the third issue, “The Twilight of the Grim Grey God,” he had found it, and for 24 issues and a spectacular swan song, “Red Nails,” he owned Conan. What Barry brought to Howard’s original stories and to Roy Thomas’ new stories, both vigorous and poetic, was something unique. He had the ability to imagine an unseen world and to fill it with detail—patterns and ornamentation, costumes and architecture, all based on his own deep knowledge of nineteenth-century British painting and design, and to a degree rarely, if ever, seen in comics—that this imaginary world before history, became real, became believable.

The passing of the torch to John Buscema came when Barry left the series and went to work on “Red Nails” with the advent of *Savage Tales.*

OPPOSITE
Savage Tales No. 4. Pinup. P. Craig Russell. May 1974.





John's approach to the character was in almost diametric opposition to Barry's in that John, a master anatomist, stressed the character's physicality, his larger-than-life, looming presence. This Conan was less like a panther and more like a Schwarzenegger, ironically years before Arnold would play the title character in the first Conan movie. And while Barry may have owned Conan in the series and into the first few issues of *Savage Tales,* it was John who would come to own *The Savage Sword of Conan.* It was John's version of the character, paying homage to the *barbaric* in Conan the Barbarian that would become *the* version for years to come. Almost all the artists who came after would follow John's character design.

And many artists did. It seemed that Conan was a character, like Batman, that every artist wanted to take a swing at, whether a single pinup, a portfolio of drawings, a cover painting or a full-length story. It was *The Savage Sword of Conan* that provided that opportunity. To name only a few of the artists who swung through the pages of *Savage Sword*: Neal Adams, Frank Brunner, Gil Kane, Gene Colan, Jim Starlin, Walter Simonson, Michael Golden, Joe Jusko, Boris Vallejo, Bill Sienkiewicz, Nestor Redondo, Rudy Nebres, Michael Kaluta, Tim Conrad and

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 64. Pinups. Alex Toth. May 1981.

ABOVE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 18. Text piece illustration. Michael Kaluta. April 1977.

Alex Niño. The list goes on. My own minor contribution, seen in this book, was a Conan drawing I did for my own amusement in 1973. (Or '72? I'll have to check.) I was deep in thrall to Barry's "The Song of Red Sonja" and his "Red Nails," and it's obvious, but I put everything I had at the time into it.

When it came to differing versions of the character, I was still solidly in the Windsor-Smith camp. I missed Barry's attention to illustrative and evocative detail when an amazing thing happened: Alfedo Alcala. Alfredo Alcala happened. I was there in the offices of Marvel in 1974 when the inked pages of another John Buscema Conan story, "Black Colossus," came into the bullpen. The pages were unlike any inked pencils we had ever seen. The sheer density of the linework was mind-boggling. Like the nineteenth-century engravings of the French artist Gustave Doré or the early twentieth-century illustrations of American Franklin Booth, Alcala had the ability to hatch and crosshatch, creating the illusion of a rich series of velvety grays which brought an illustrative polish that perfectly complemented Buscema's rock-solid pencil work. Any appearance of this team-up would be a highlight to be looked forward to in the ensuing years. It was a team-up as perfect in its own way as that of Rodgers and Hammerstein, Fred and Ginger or Lee and Kirby.

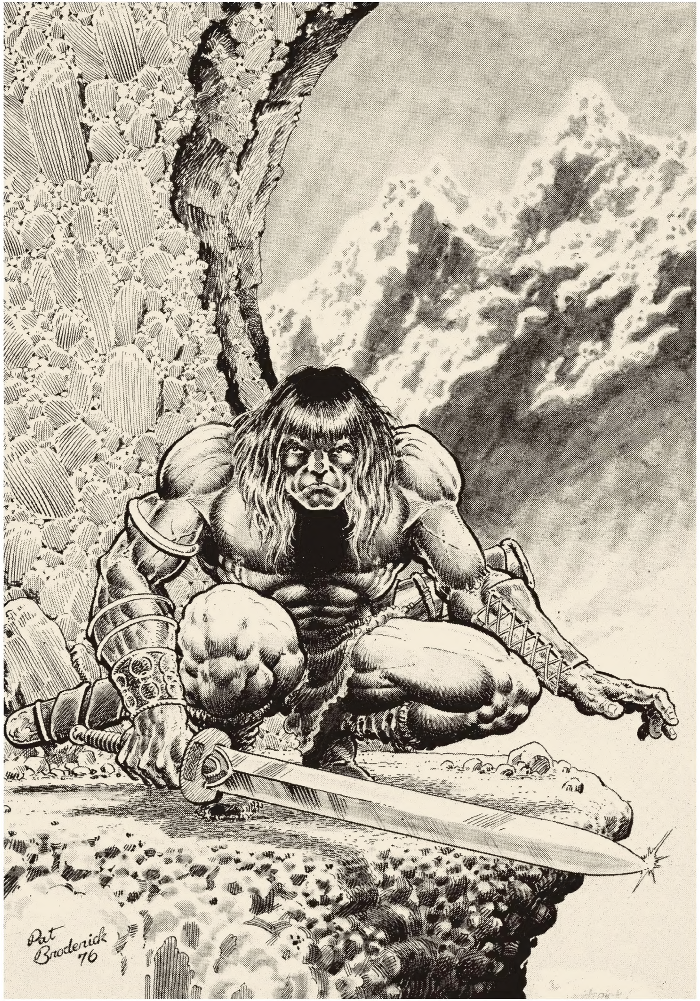
In its day, like *Heavy Metal* or Marvel's own *Epic Magazine*, *Savage Sword* provided a much-needed outlet for stories and art that wouldn't fit into smaller conventional newsstand comics, twin-burdened on the one hand by the Comics Code Authority and inferior reproduction on the other.

It is missed by many.

It had a good run.

Noted fantasy illustrator P. Craig Russell has done it all in comics. After establishing himself at Marvel on Killraven *and* Doctor Strange*, Russell expanded the possibilities of the medium with adaptations of operas by Mozart ("The Magic Flute"), Strauss ("Salome") and Wagner ("The Ring of the Nibelung"). He also collaborated with Neil Gaiman on graphic novel adaptations of the writer's works.*

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 18. Pinup. Pat Broderick. April 1977.



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Digital Production: Meghan O'Leary

Special thanks to Cory Sedlmeier

Extra special thanks to Robert E. Howard for creating the icon, to Frank Frazetta for breathing life into him, to Roy Thomas for bringing him to Marvel and laying the groundwork for the ultimate sword-and-sorcery saga and to all the artists who have ever put their hearts, souls, pencils and ink into visualizing him.

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FRONT COVER
Marvel Comics Super Special No. 2. Cover. Earl Norem. 1977.

INSIDE FRONT AND INSIDE BACK COVERS
Savage Tales No. 4. Pinup. P. Craig Russell. May 1974.

PAGE 1
Savage Sword of Conan No. 16. Pinup. Gene Day. December 1976.

PAGES 2-3
Savage Sword of Conan No. 107. Pinup. Rudy Nebres. December 1984.

OPPOSITE
Savage Sword of Conan No. 200. Interior art, "Barbarians of the Border." Script, Roy Thomas; pencils, John Buscema; inks, Ernie Chan. August 1992.

PAGE 224
Savage Tales No. 4. Text piece illustration. Al Williamson. May 1974.

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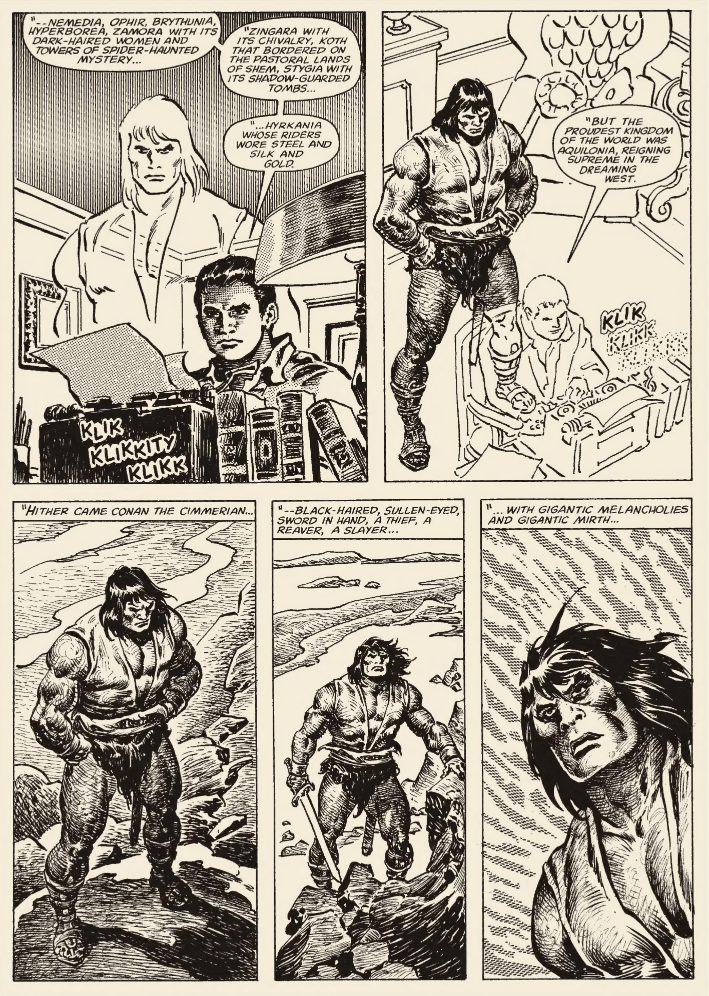
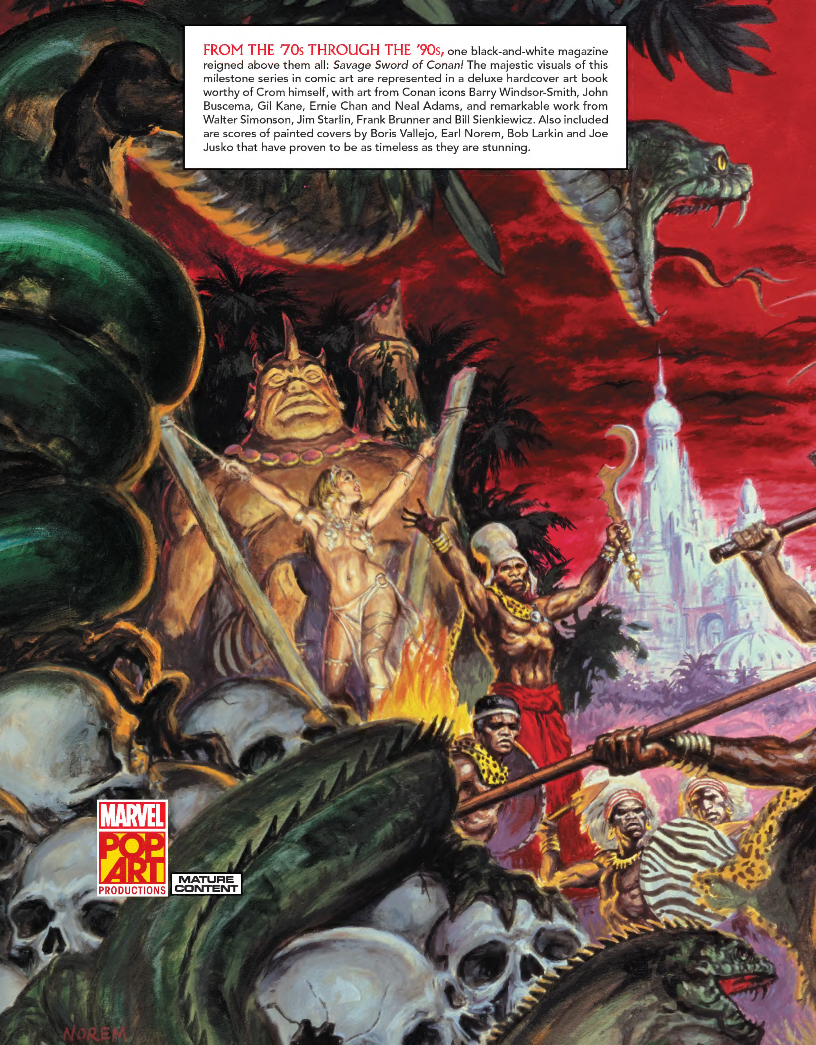

"--NEMEDIA, OPHIR, BRYTHUNIA, HYPERBOREA, ZAMORA WITH ITS DARK-HAIRED WOMEN AND TOWERS OF SPIDER-HAUNTED MYSTERY...
"ZINGARA WITH ITS CHIVALRY, KOTH THAT BORDERED ON THE PASTORAL LANDS OF SHEM, STYGIA WITH ITS SHADOW-GUARDED TOMBS...
"...HYRKANIA WHOSE RIDERS WORE STEEL AND SILK AND GOLD.
KLIK KLIKKITY KLIKK
"BUT THE PROUDEST KINGDOM OF THE WORLD WAS AQUILONIA, REIGNING SUPREME IN THE DREAMING WEST.
KLIK KLIKK KLIKK
"HITHER CAME CONAN THE CIMMERIAN...
"--BLACK-HAIRED, SULLEN-EYED, SWORD IN HAND, A THIEF, A REAVER, A SLAYER...
"...WITH GIGANTIC MELANCHOLIES AND GIGANTIC MIRTH...

FROM THE '70s THROUGH THE '90s, one black-and-white magazine reigned above them all: *Savage Sword of Conan!* The majestic visuals of this milestone series in comic art are represented in a deluxe hardcover art book worthy of Crom himself, with art from Conan icons Barry Windsor-Smith, John Buscema, Gil Kane, Ernie Chan and Neal Adams, and remarkable work from Walter Simonson, Jim Starlin, Frank Brunner and Bill Sienkiewicz. Also included are scores of painted covers by Boris Vallejo, Earl Norem, Bob Larkin and Joe Jusko that have proven to be as timeless as they are stunning.



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